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## TO

# PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

## DISCOURSES ON JNANA YOGA

By SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

The greatest teacher of Vedanta Philosophy was Sankaracharya. By solid reasoning he extracted from the Vedas the truths of Vedanta, and on them built up the wonderful system of Jnana, that is taught in his commentaries. He unified all the conflicting descriptions of Brahman and showed that there is only One Infinite Reality. He showed, too, that as man can only travel slowly on the upward road, all the varied presentations are needed to suit his varying capacity. We find something akin to this in the teachings of Jesus, which he evidently adapted to the different abilities among his hearers. First he taught them of a Father in heaven to pray to Him. Next he rose a step higher and told them, “I am the vine, you are the branches,” and lastly he gave them the highest truth: “I and my Father are one,” and “The kingdom of heaven is within you.” Sankara taught that three things were the great gifts of God: 1. Human body, 2. Thirst after God, 3. A teacher who can show us the light.

When these three great gifts are ours, we may know that our redemption is at hand. Only knowledge can free and save us, but with knowledge must go virtue.

The essence of Vedanta is that there is but *One Being* and that every soul is that *Being in full*, not a part of that *Being*. All the sun is reflected in each dew drop. Appearing in time, space and causality, this *Being* is man, as we know him, but behind all appearance is the *One Reality*. Unselfishness is the denial of the lower or apparent self. We have to free ourselves from this miserable dream, that we are these bodies. We must *know* the truth, “I am He.” We are not drops to fall into the ocean and be lost; each one is the *whole*, infinite ocean, and will know it when released from the fetters of illusion. Infinity cannot be divided, the “One without a second” can have no second, all is that *One*. This knowledge will come to all, but we should struggle to attain it now, because until we have it, we cannot really give man-





all the struggles of his stormy soul. The present and the past, the East and the West, dream and action there delivered assault. He knew too much, he could do too much, to win harmony at the expense of renouncing any part of his nature, any part of the whole truth. And the synthesis of the great opposing factions took years of struggle, wherein his heroism was consumed with his life. Battle and Life were synonyms in his case.\* Very few days made up his allotted span. Sixteen years from

Ramakrishna's death to that of the great disciple. . . A flash! It was less than forty years before the athlete was stretched on his funeral pyre. . .

But the fire of that pyre still burns. And like the Phoenix of old, from his ashes the conscience of India—the magic bird—has risen—faith in its unity and in the Great Message, which from the time of the Vedas broods over the dreaming spirit of a millenary people, and which it holds in ward for the rest of humanity.

## SWAMI VIVEKANANDA: THE INNER MAN

BY THE EDITOR

### I

When there is a flood, it covers a wide area and we see only a vast expanse of water. But when the flood subsides, it leaves behind many pools and ditches, each of them feeling its existence as separate from others, totally oblivious of the fact that they all belonged to the same flood waters. In the same way when a prophet comes he inundates the country with spiritual and religious fervour. But after his passing away ensues quarrel and discussion as to what he had actually said and meant. His teachings are discussed piecemeal and found sometimes one contradicting the other, and his followers and admirers are bewildered. This is the reason why there are so many schisms in every religious order—why though a prophet comes to bring unity and peace on earth, after some years of his passing away, in his very name there are so many fighting parties. The prophet perhaps said a simple thing which went straight to the heart of even his simplest disciple; but afterwards big philosophy is built upon that and furious

discussions begin as to what he really meant. Jesus did not say anything very difficult to understand (though hard to practise), but see, how many schools of Christianity are in the world to-day and how much bloodshed and persecution have tainted the pages of its history; and all that for finding out the correct interpretation of the teachings of Jesus. If Buddha emphasised anything more than all others, it was the practice of religion instead of wasting breath over learned discussions on tenets. Yet most abstruse metaphysics have been built in his name after he was gone, one school differing from another as day from night, and quite bewildering to those who want to find some light therefrom for the growth of religious life.

This has been the case with the teachings of almost all the prophets in the world, and we cannot say that those of Swami Vivekananda will escape this fate. Already conflicting thoughts have arisen as to what was the essence of the teachings of the patriot-saint of modern India. Was the patriot or the saint stronger in him? Which was more prominent in him—the love of the country or the love of religion? Swami Vivekananda talked on so many subjects. How to find out the connecting link among them? He talked on *Jñāna*, *Bhakti*, *Karma*, each time throwing the

\* Did he not define life as "the tendency of the unfoldment and development of a being under circumstances tending to press it down"?

(April 1891: Interviews with the Maharajah of Khetri.)

weight of his whole personality on the subject under discussion. Which was nearest to his heart? In fact, Swami Vivekananda with his complex personality has been an enigma to many. So, many have to rest contented with simply one or another aspect of his character. Some find in Swami Vivekananda only a patriot—they are altogether blind to the religious side of his character. Others see in him only a religious teacher—Swami Vivekananda's work, mission and organisation have not much charm for them. Swami Vivekananda was a breaker of bondage—why then the bondage of work again? Some look to the teachings of Swami Vivekananda in support of their scheme of social reform, while others like that great soul because of his love for the poor and his generous heart which could encompass within it the whole of humanity, for wherever people suffered—the sinner, the miserable, the weak, the oppressed—all could be sure of sympathy from him.

The reason why there is so much difference of opinions about the teachings of any prophet is that we see his teachings piecemeal according to our individual capacities and temperaments, and as disconnected from the life from which those teachings emanated. In God all contradictions meet. This is true to a certain extent also of the lives of prophets. Some blind men narrated what an elephant was like. They touched the body of the elephant and each described the part that he felt to be the elephant itself. Now each of them was perhaps right in a way, but the elephant was more than what they described. Each describes the teachings of a prophet in his own way—his sincerity cannot be questioned—but the teacher is more than what we can see him through his teachings. So to understand the teachings of a prophet, we should understand his life first.

The case of the Swami Vivekananda is not exceptional. To get at the essence of his teachings, we must see them in relation to the life he lived, with reference to the forces that went

to build up Vivekananda as he was. For this we should thoroughly study the formative period of his life and get ourselves acquainted with the struggles he underwent and the hopes and fears that throbbed in his heart during his early life.

## II

Swami Vivekananda was nurtured in a deep religious atmosphere at home. His grandfather gave up the world to become a *Sannyāsin* and the memory of that must have greatly influenced the life of those who were left behind. His father was also a pious man and well-known for his generous heart. His charity would not wait for discrimination and his life was largely marked by indifference to worldly things. He was greatly devoted to the reading of the Bible and the poems of the Sufi poet Hafiz. His mother was also of a deeply devotional nature: it was her faith in God, which sustained her when the family afterwards suffered from a great reversal of fortune.

From early boyhood Narendranath (Swami Vivekananda as he was known before he left the world) was given to meditation. Even when four or five years of age he would sometimes meditate for long hours before one or another image of God. When he was angry, the utterance of the name of Shiva by a bystander was sure to pacify him. When on the threshold of youth, two parallel visions would appear before him night after night for a long time. One was that of great prosperity and immense wealth by which one becomes greatly influential in the society; the other was that of a *Sannyāsin* who gives up everything and roams about in search of God clad only in a loin-cloth. Swami Vivekananda said that there would thus be a conflict between these two visions, and on every occasion the vision of the latter, namely, that of a *Sannyāsin*, would overpower his soul before he fell unconscious in sleep. From this time he would think that the consummation of human life was the

realisation of God, and this was the undercurrent of all his mental struggles till he found lasting peace from the Man of Dakshineswar.

In the college days the study of Western philosophy for a time disturbed the equilibrium of his belief, and he was seized with a doubt if there was God at all, and if He existed, why He could not be realised. The mere study of books could not satisfy his thirst of religion—he would discuss the problem threadbare with many of his associates and persons who were likely to throw better light on his difficulties. Those were the days of terrible struggle. One day he ran frenzied to Devendranath Tagore, the most respected figure of the then Brahmo Samâj and straight put to him the question: "Sir, have you seen God?" He was eager to see a man who could talk of God not from a second or third-hand information, but from direct experience. And at last he found a man who was more than ready to take up his challenge and said: "Not only can God be seen, but I can help you to realise Him."

From the time Sri Ramakrishna saw Narendranath, he perceived the latter's great spiritual potentiality. Afterwards Sri Ramakrishna would compare Narendranath to the *Homâ* bird said to be described in the Vedas. These birds come to life as the eggs laid by their mothers in the high sky fall towards the earth, but before they reach the ground, they fly back from earth to their mother in the high empyrean. Similar was the case of Narendranath. Trailing clouds of glory he came from God and untouched by any worldliness he went back to Him.

Even Narendranath's spiritual life was not built by any sudden magic stroke. He had to pay dearly for his spiritual realisations. But great as he was, he conquered all difficulties. After the death of his father, the prosperous family of Narendranath at once fell into a crushing poverty and they were literally face to face with starvation. A youngman of parts like Narendranath

could not secure any paltry job to keep the wolf from the door—such was the irony of fate. But here Narendranath's love for God was put to acid test. Even under such trying circumstances he could not pray to God for any worldly thing. When sent by Sri Ramakrishna to the temple of Kâli to pray to the Mother for saving the family from poverty, Narendranath returned after praying for sometime and said that he could not ask any worldly thing of the Mother, but prayed only for devotion. This brightened up the face of Sri Ramakrishna with a profound joy. On another occasion Sri Ramakrishna offered Swami Vivekananda some supernatural powers, but they were sternly rejected by the latter as being no help to the realisation of Truth. Swami Vivekananda had to pass through many fiery ordeals before he realised the Highest Truth in life. Even after the passing away of Sri Ramakrishna Swami Vivekananda underwent severe *tapasyâ* in the monastery at Baranagore and other places. His idea was to be more and more absorbed in the meditation of God.

### III

But Swami Vivekananda was not to lose himself absolutely in the divine contemplation—he had also other duties to perform. One day asked by Sri Ramakrishna as to what would be the greatest joy of his life, Swami Vivekananda replied that it was to be immersed in *Samâdhi*. Sri Ramakrishna cried fie upon him and remarked that he had considered him to be of a nobler stuff. He was to shoulder the burden of innumerable struggling souls wearied of life and not to look to any personal end. This was perhaps the tragedy of Swami Vivekananda's life—if it can be called a tragedy at all—as found in the inner conflict in his latter days.

Gradually the teacher in Swami Vivekananda began to grow and even in his wandering days when he carefully sought to obliterate himself he was found to be a dynamic apostle of

Hinduism and Hindu culture. True he talked on all subjects dealing with various phases of the Indian problem, wherever he was engaged in conversation, but it was the rôle of a religious teacher that was most prominent in him. He impressed the people first as a *Sannyâsin*, then as anything else. Once in the court of the Raja of Ramnad when he was challenged by some Pundits in course of a debate, he boldly said: "I have realised the Absolute in the superconscious state. I am the proof of the Vedas!" Again in Madras when he was assailed with the question how he could possibly reconcile the philosophical creeds of the *Dvaita*, the *Visistâdvaita* and the *Advaita*, which could not be done even by great *Achâryas* like Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhva and others, he coolly said: "Because it was left for me to do it! Because I was born to show this to the world."

Swami Vivekananda was more an awakener of soul than a religious teacher who is contented with merely giving a message. A new message he had certainly to give, but while giving the message he could send with it a power to transmute lives. An obscure monk from a heathen land, it is true, astounded the audience in the famous Parliament of Religions by his able advocacy of the cause of Hinduism, and this may be an important event in the religious history of the world. But Swami Vivekananda is more reverentially remembered by those of his American audience, who came in close touch with him. For, his very presence worked in the disciples changes unawares, and his mere wish was sufficient to dispel the darkness of lives. It was with reference to this that the Sister Nivedita said: "One's whole attitude of things was reversed; one took fire, as it were, with a given idea; or one suddenly found that a whole habit of thought had left one, and a new outlook grown up in its place, without the interchange of a single word on the subject. It seemed as if a thing had passed beyond the realm of dis-

cussion, and knowledge had grown by the mere fact of nearness to him. It was in this way that questions of taste and value became different. It was in this way that the longing for renunciation was lighted, like a devouring flame, in the hearts of those about him." Himself become free, he was a breaker of bondage wherever he went. "Here and there he came forth with a message to the society, but his *gurubhâis* and disciples always think of him as the monk of monks, the man of Realisation, the Awakener of souls, the complement of Sri Ramakrishna and the bearer of the Message of his Master, which is the Message of India and Sanatan Dharma, to herself and to the rest of the world."

#### IV

But how is it that this important element in the character of Swami Vivekananda is ignored by many while valuing and accepting his solutions of the Indian problems? It cannot be gainsaid that Swami Vivekananda as a patriot has got a wider circle of admirers than as a saint. This is simply because of the general weariness of and distaste for religion, that have come over the world, and even India, forming a part of the world, has not been spared.

Those who are averse to religion says that religion has done more harm to society and mankind than good. Religion has suppressed reason and has ever been opposed to progress. It has made men less self-reliant and more other-worldly. Religion has been the source of inhuman bloodshed and persecution in the world and has disturbed its peace more than anything else. And they are determined to leave religion, God, etc., severely alone. Apart from the validity of the issues raised, it can be said that to deny religion altogether is to deny the entire religious experience of the past. Thousands may be irreligious in the name of religion, but has not the world seen persons who have been the salt of the earth and blessings unto mankind?

In Swami Vivekananda religion found a new definition and it covered a wider ground. According to him, religion is the end of all activities in which man employs himself. What is that which a man wants? What is that in terms of which every other desire of man can be evaluated? Swami Vivekananda would say that after close analysis it would be found to be freedom. It is the lure of freedom that impels a robber to commit robbery, a scientist to explore the domains of nature and a saint to dive deep within himself leaving everything aside. Man does not like to be in any bondage or shackle, to be dependent on anything whatsoever. So he is restless to be free. And consciously and unconsciously he is struggling to reach that goal. "To be more free is the goal of all our efforts," said the Swami and he defined God as the "embodiment of freedom." Now, how can we be perfectly free? It is by the knowledge of the Self. By knowing himself a man will tower above all things in the universe, for the mine of infinite strength and infinite knowledge lies hidden within him. "Each soul is potentially divine," he would say. "The goal is to manifest the Divine within by controlling nature, external and internal. . . . This is the whole of religion. Doctrines or dogmas, or rituals or books, or temples or forms are but secondary details." To him religion was not synonymous with mystery-mongering, and to be religious, according to him, man needed not to look to the vaulted blue in mortal fear. He did not speak of "imps" or "astrals" and would talk of nothing but strength. To him strength was religion and whatever begot weakness was irreligion.

Now, if every one is potentially divine, if God is all-pervasive, all our actions become worship. We need not seek God only in temples and caves, but we can as well see Him in the work-a-day world. If we be *Atman*, we are to assert that in all our activities, in every moment of our life. The greatest contribution of the Swami Vivekananda to

the modern thought will be his conception of the practical Vedanta. If even a shoe-maker does his work in right spirit he can realise God, much more quickly than a so-called religious man who lives a hypocritical life. His whole ambition was to bring the highest truths of religion out from closets and caves to the open world for the benefit of all. "For, if a religion cannot help man wherever he may be, where he stands, it is not of much use; it will remain only a theory for the chosen few." It was this practical aspect of religion as preached by Swami Vivekananda, which drew round him all kinds of people and made him the idol even of those who were not *purely* religious in the orthodox sense. This also explains why people want to see him piecemeal—some as a patriot and others as a social reformer and so on.

But the fact that Swami Vivekananda was a *Sannyāsin par excellence*, an all-renouncing monk, does not in any way belittle his importance as a great lover of India. For it is a fact that he loved India intensely, most intensely. Even a man of realisation cannot set aside all the demands of the physical body, and no wonder that Swami Vivekananda could not deny the demands of his country. His love for India was so very great that at times it overpowered all other sides of his nature. The luxuries of his American life were a torture to him, because India was steeped in poverty, and he passed sleepless nights in America when the news of a famine reached him from India. At times he would grow frantic, to the astonishment of his Western followers, thinking or talking of the sufferings of India. It was the echo of his personal experience when he said addressing all would-be workers for the cause of India: "Does it (the hard condition of India) make you restless? Does it make you sleepless? Has it gone into your blood, coursing through your veins, becoming consonant with your heart-beats? Has it made you almost mad? Are you seized with that

one idea of the misery and ruin, and have you forgotten all about your name, your fame, your dear ones, your property, even your own bodies? Have you done that? This is the first step to become a patriot, the very first step."

## V

But behind all his patriotism, deep down there was the religious motive. For to him India was synonymous with the spirit of religion. "If India is to die," he said, "religion will be wiped off from the face of the earth." He did not want to see India a replica of a Western country, but his dream of future India was that along with material prosperity, which would be hers, she would as the Queen of Nations, extend the hand of peace and blessedness to all peoples of the world.

Even those who rallied round him, he wished to see them work not so much from a *humanitarian* as from a *spiritual* motive. It cannot be that those who gave up the world and took refuge in him in search of truth were duped by Swami Vivekananda with a false hope. He strongly emphasised that by social work, by serving the poor and nursing the sick, one would be able to *see* God, for does not God exist, also in them? So what is the use of digging a well for drinking water on the bank of the Ganges? It was from this view-point that he said: "Don't give a pice to the poor proudly and think you have laid him under obligation. Rather kneel down before him to thank him for the opportunity you have found to serve the God in him."

Even in the message which he left for his countrymen and others there is the reflection of his experience as a man of realisation. To each individual his advice was: "Be yourself. Be God and make others God." It was Swami Vivekananda who for the first time after an age-long stupor turned the attention of his countrymen to the innate strength and greatness of the country. In the last century India

passed through a great national crisis. Dazzled by the glittering civilisation of the West our educated people lost all faith in the country and its past, and the whole land was about to be engulfed by an alien civilisation. Even the boldest amongst them could not find anything to boast of in India, and imitation became the rule. Swami Vivekananda showed that even in its apparent weakness lay the real strength of India. He had the vision of a poet and the penetration of a philosopher to find even the dust of India sacred. The outlook of the whole nation was changed by Swami Vivekananda and he was acclaimed as the messenger of a glorious New Dawn.

It is said in the scriptures that to one who has realised the *Brahman*, the whole phenomenal world seems as a dream. If that was the case with Swami Vivekananda, it may be said that his was a transfigured dream. For in him we always find the commingling of two diagonal forces. At times we find him trying to dive down into the depths of his inner being and at other times we see him agonising at the sufferings of humanity and bursting out: "To work for the good of humanity, has been my motto all through life. Even though I die I shall still work for the salvation of India, for the salvation of mankind." Even while not-meditating deliberately he was constantly losing himself in thought. "The difficulty with which he would stop the momentum that would carry him into meditation, had been seen by his American friends in the early days of his life in that country of rail-roads and tramways and complicated engagements." While he was making plans and programmes of work and busy watching its progress, we hear the subdued cry of agony: "I am entangled." In the midst of his success in America he writes in 1894: "How I should like to become dumb for some years, and not talk at all! I was not made for these worldly fights and struggles. I am naturally dreamy and slothful. I am

a born idealist, and can only live in a world of dreams. The touch of material things disturbs my visions and makes me unhappy. But Thy will be done!" Occasionally he would feel as if he was being worked by a Superior Force, over which he had no control.

Two years before his passing away he wrote: "Work is always difficult; pray for me, . . . that my work may stop for ever, and my whole soul be absorbed in Mother. Her works She knows. . . . ."

"I am well, very well mentally. I feel the rest of the soul more than that of the body. The battles are lost and won. I have bundled my things and am waiting for the great deliverer.

". . . . . 'Shiva, O Shiva, carry my boat to the other shore.'

"After all, I am only the boy who used to listen with rapt wonderment to the wonderful words of Ramakrishna under the Banian at Dakshineswar. That is my true nature; works and activities and so forth are all super-

impositions. Now I again hear his voice, the same old voice thrilling my soul. Bonds are breaking—love dying, work becoming tasteless—the glamour is off life. Now only the voice of the Master calling.

"I am glad I was born, glad I suffered so, glad I did make big blunders, glad to enter peace. I leave none bound, I take no bonds. Behind my work was ambition, behind my love was personality, behind my purity was fear, behind my guidance the thirst of power. Now, they are vanishing and I drift. I come, Mother, I come, in the warm bosom, floating wheresoever Thou takest me, in the voiceless, in the strange, in the wonderland, I come—a spectator, no more an actor."

Such was the writhing agony of a mighty soul who wanted to bridge the gulf between Heaven and Earth, whose mind was always running to the Highest, but whom the thought of the misery of the world constantly dragged down!

## THE DIARY OF A DISCIPLE

30TH MAY, 1913.

In the afternoon, in the Visitors' Room at the Belur Monastery, the disciple was listening to the reading of *Sri Sri Rāmakrishna Kathāmrita* (The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna). Some said that Sri Ramakrishna used to accept one as disciple only after proper enquiry,—after observing his ways, manners and physiognomy and asking about his people and if he was free from debts. On hearing this the disciple said: "Then it is not true that all were recipients of his grace. There is a song about the Master, in which a devotee says that however degraded he might be, he would have the shelter of the Master's blessed feet. Is it not true?"

*Swami Premananda*: "Why not? He showered his grace on Girish Chandra Ghosh and even on many prostitutes. One day the ladies of Bala-

ram Babu's family were sitting before the Master in his room, when a prostitute named Ramani passed along a road close by. The Master called out to her and asked: 'Why don't you come now-a-days?' The ladies were scandalised to hear the Master talking with a prostitute.

"Shortly after the Master took them to visit the shrines. When they reached the Kali temple, the Master addressed the Mother saying: 'Mother, Thou indeed hast become the prostitute Ramani: Thou has become both the prostitute and the chaste woman!' The ladies understood that they were wrong in hating Ramani, that the Master spoke with her, knowing her to be the Mother Herself and that they had nothing to be unusually proud of their chastity, for it was all due to Her will."

*Disciple*: "The Master might have been all right in not hating the prosti-



tute. But unless we hate the prostitutes, how shall we live apart from them? At least we must pity them even if we do not hate them."

Swami: "Why should you hate? Even pity comes out of egoism. Have you not heard the Master's stories of the tiger-Nārāyana and the elephant-Nārāyana? If we are to live away from a tiger and an elephant, are we to hate or pity them? Salute them from afar, thinking that it is through the will of God that they are what they are and that it is through His will again that you are what you are, and His will can in a moment redeem them for ever and drag you down. Destroy your pride and egoism once for all. The prostitute Ramani has now become a great devotee and sheds tears in remembrance of the Master."

17TH JUNE, 1913.

It was again at the Visitors' Room at the Belur Math. After the afternoon class on *Sri Sri Rāmakrishna Kathāmrita* was over, Swami Premananda said:

"Every *Sādhaka* must take up a definite attitude towards God and stick to it. He must maintain it under all conditions. There are many *bhāvas*, (attitudes) possible. The Master practised in all *bhāvas*, as a friend, a lady-friend and a sweetheart of the Lord, and also in the attitude of Balarāma, the brother of Sri Krishna. One can also practise in the *bhāva* of Mahādeva.

"One must have intense dispassion for the world and deep hankering for the Lord—'I must realise Him even in this birth: even now!' No slow process! Remember this carefully: Work is no use if you do not get immersed in Him. Make your heart a temple of the Lord and install Him there. Take His name and for ever lose yourselves in Him."

Next day the mother of Swami Premananda visited the Math. After she had rested a little, the disciple asked her: "When the Master asked you to give him your son, what did he actually say?"

She replied: "He said: 'Give me your son. I feel much pleased even when he gives me a glass of water.' I said: 'Does anybody give away her son for nothing?' He then smiled and replied: 'What shall I give you? May you have devotion to your Chosen Deity!'"

29TH AND 30TH MAY, 1915.

Swami Premananda had come on a visit to Rarhikhal in East Bengal, and was staying at the ancestral home of Sir J. C. Bose. The residents of the village were celebrating the festival of Sri Ramakrishna and there was great enthusiasm among all sections of people. Men, women, boys, girls, Hindus, Mussalmans, all came to visit the Swami and everyone felt a deep love and attraction for him. A villager who was a teacher in a Dacca school, was narrating his family mishaps to the Swami. The Swami said:

"There was a Brahmo gentleman, named Mani Mallik, who used to visit the Master. His eldest son had seen the Master in the Church of Keshab Chandra Sen and had said to his father: 'He seems to me to be a true *Sādhū*. Go and visit him.' When Mani Mallik came to the Master, the Master said to him: 'Are you not —'s father? You look like that.' Then that son died. Mallik was overwhelmed with grief and came to the Master for relief. At first the Master said: 'Indeed, what can you do? The bereavement of a son is no trifling thing,' and so on. He then sat silent for a while, after which he began to sing, clapping his hands: 'To arms! To arms! O man, Death enters thy home in battle array!' etc. Before he left, Mallik said to the Master: 'My mind is quite peaceful now. Now I suffer no more.'"

Next day the Swami said, addressing the monks who had accompanied him: "I am overjoyed to see their (of the villagers) enthusiasm. The Master fed us so often with sweets, and loved us so much! Thus did we go to him. But what have *they* got? They have

merely read of him in books. And yet how full of joy and enthusiasm they are! In this hot sun they went to the station and themselves carried all loads, barefooted and bare-headed. And they are cooking for all. They also serve cholera patients and thus rid themselves of all pride, egoism and fear. And they are quite mindful of their studies also. All this fills me with a great joy. It is to see these things that I hasten to these parts, and not to earn name and fame for myself. What am I doing? The Master himself has accomplished everything already. Swamiji said: 'The Master will be worshipped in every home. Go forth all of you and spread his name everywhere.' Otherwise what shall I, an ignorant man, preach? . . . When I see all this, I think within myself: 'This body will perish one day. What is the good of remaining at home for the sake of health? If my presence serves any purpose of the people, let me suffer all the troubles of travel and movement. I don't mind.\*' Otherwise why should I undergo all the troubles of irregular meals and sleeplessness? You see yourselves, there is no pleasure in these.

"In these places I actually see what the Master and Swamiji had prophesied before. You will not require to do much. Just observe these things carefully, and you will learn to love the Master automatically. Is it easy to meditate and repeat His name continually? Impossible. Therefore meditate as long as you can and devote the rest of the time in selfless service to others. Thus gradually will your mind be purified and attached to the Lord."

The Swami thus narrated his early life in course of another conversation:

"My mother used now and then to shut herself within a room and meditate all day. If we happened to return home from Calcutta on those days, we had to live in a neighbouring house, and meet her next day. She was very strict in her discipline. She would never allow us to stay with her in the village home, because she feared that would spoil our education. But she would never utter a harsh word to her daughters-in-law and maid-servants. . . I was very naughty as a young boy. So I have got some scars on my head. Swamiji said: 'He is no boy, who has no scars on his head.' "

## THE LESSONS OF RELIGIOUS INDIA TO EUROPE

BY CARLO FORMICHI

Not all the currents of Indian religious thought are known to Europe; and if we wish to inquire into the influence which religious India might exert on us, it is necessary to take into consideration only those doctrines which are more or less imperfectly familiar to our public.

One first lesson which India teaches us through the religious hymns of the *Rig* and the *Atharva Veda*, through the great epic poems of the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyana*, and through the

*Purāṇas*, enables us to change our usual notions of Nature. We see at play in the Universe only mechanical forces which are blind and unconscious and which we have to know only in order to subdue them. Earth, water, air and fire preoccupy our attention only in so far as they are serviceable to our existence, and we forget that we ourselves are an aggregate of earth, water, air and fire. We discern a gulf, a separation and dissidence rather than a homogeneity and solidarity, between man and Nature; and because we love ourselves, we do not love Nature which we consider to be different from us, and we think with terror of the death which will resolve our bodies into the

\* Just on his return to the Belur Monastery from this visit, the Swami had a severe attack of cholera. The Swami suffered a long time from Kala-azar contracted during one of his visits to Eastern Bengal and may be said to have died of it.

elements. Nor do we take seriously our poets who exalt the greatness of Nature.

The polytheistic world of India, on the contrary, rejects this disjunction between man and Nature, and instructs us to observe human life as a part of the universal life, to think that the frontiers between spirit and matter are not insuperable, and to remember always that the noblest thought of ours is, in the last analysis, a piece of bread or a fruit of the earth, digested and assimilated. There is a genius in the flaming sun, the cleansing wind, the thundering clouds, the sweeping fire, the inebriating liquor and the scintillating stone. Man lives his life only in tune with the Universal All; he is not isolated from the rest of the world, but he respires like the wind, sees like the sun, hears like the ether, fertilises like water, assimilates like the earth, loves, hates, thinks and meditates like the rest of Nature. The Universe is the great temple of God who fills every object with His breath which is at once impulse, life, thought, ecstasy, and a perennially inextinguishable energy.

This religious attitude, characteristic of the Aryan racial stock, *i.e.*, of our race, should needs hold out to us an irresistible fascination, though into our veins have been inoculated the germs of Semitic religions which do not take the least account of the harmonic pulsation of cosmic and human life, and reduce everything to a pact of alliance between an omnipotent monarch in heaven and his chosen people on earth. The magnificent world of Indian myths and legends will ever be for us the best antidote for the toxin of the Semitic religious outlook which, narrow and unilateral as it is, fomented intolerance and remains irreconcilably averse to the scientific-philosophic spirit.

Thanks particularly to Paul Duessen, Europe to-day is in a position to know the teachings contained in the *Upanishads*, which together with the Buddhistic texts constitute the noblest of India's achievements in the spiritual

field. The *Upanishads* were the solace of Schopenhauer's life and the comfort of his death, even at the time when the extant translations were vague and incorrect. To-day in the clear German version of Paul Duessen, the *Upanishads* are no longer a secret or a puzzle for us; and if they do not happen to be the solace of our life and of our death, it is due to the defect of our eyes and not to the imperfection or the dimness of the light emanating from them.

One first immortal lesson which we learn from the *Upanishads* relates to the method of spiritual inquiry. If we wish to search for the mystery of the Universe, it is futile to study it in its parts, as is done by our science which finds itself ever compelled to postpone the definitive solution of the problems of the Universe, even like a debtor who puts off the payment of his debt from day to day and yet never pays at all. The Universe in its completeness manifests itself to us where we expect it the least: in our tiny self. The macrocosm is mirrored in the microcosm; just as when once I study a little piece of iron, I know all that is made of iron, so when once I know myself, I know all the rest of the world also: *Tat tvam asi*. The word *âtman*, equivalent to "I", "myself", is the alpha and omega of every metaphysical inquiry. If I seek for the mystery outside of myself, I become entangled in the net of the laws of causality and I fail to discover the mystery; and having failed to discover it, I end by thinking that it does not exist. If I see for the mystery in myself, I discover it suddenly in my recognition that it does not allow itself to be known by me, that it sees without being seen, hears without being heard, tastes without being tasted, and so on. The *âtman* is outside the law of causality, outside space and time, and sets us in the presence of God and of the Soul.

The *âtman* is inherent in every life (*jiva*) and the characteristic of life is that it is adapted to deploy itself and then to return to itself, to ascend farther

and farther upwards till it reaches the ecstasy of consciousness, and to descend deeper and deeper downwards till it touches the stage of the simple manifestation of breath and of heat, *i.e.*, till a stage which is no longer perceptible to our senses. Nothing is more mobile, more restless than *jiva*, than *âtman*; it goes and comes without rest, it gets out of itself for observing the external world, and then, as if repentant hastens back, so as to compose itself in its lodging place. It is like a fire shooting out sparks, a spider distending its web, a falcon leaving its nest, wandering here and there through the air and finally turning to its place of repose. For long can the *âtman* not stand outside of itself, which fact is proved by the necessity for sleep. When we fall asleep, the *âtman* makes one of its constant retreats; it does not arrive at its ultimate stage as when we are on the point of death, and when it remains invisible to us, but it posts itself at the stage of respiration, still perceptible to us. In sleep all our senses cease to function, but the respiration does not stop, and this is indeed one of the forms of the *âtman*, which demonstrate its immortality. The restless elf (*yaksha*), as it has been called by a sage of the *Atharva Veda*, is ever ready to flee into concealment, if it finds itself in discord with the lodging it has chosen. If a branch of the tree is eaten into by worms, the *âtman* flees from it, and the branch withers away. If an evil spasm twitches an organ of our body, the *âtman* suddenly beats a retreat, leaving us in a fainting fit. In death we can distinctly observe the regression which gradually the *âtman* makes into itself: before complete disappearance, consciousness remains, respiration continues; then respiration itself stops, but the heat of the body persists; and when the heat of the body itself escapes, we lose out of sight the "elf" which takes flight. But because we lose sight of it, we are not to think that it no longer exists, or that it is dead. What is abandoned by the *âtman* alone dies, and not indeed

the *âtman* itself which is imperishable and eternal. Life (*jiva*) cannot be death; to think that life dies is a contradiction in terms; rather, all that from which life escapes, dies.

This conception of life as a perennial energy which from being a form underlying even bodily heat and thence imperceptible to our senses, eventually manifests itself as soul and consciousness, signalises the immortality of the soul and the certainty of rebirth. If the departed dead did not return to occupy their places here in the world of the living, every heaven and every hell should be filled to overflowing, and be obliged to close its gates. How is it that the world beyond is never filled, though from eternity Death has been insatiably feasting itself on the living, even as fire is unsated with firewood, and the ocean with the waters of rivers? The fact is that the dead return from the other world to this earth, that nothing is created anew in the Universe, that every born thing is destined to die, and everything that dies is destined to be reborn (*Samsâra*).

This is how from the study of the tiny "I", from the *âtman*, I succeed in giving a basis to the entire Universe, in discovering in it the *âtman* itself, the imperishable substance, the reality of reality (*Satyasya Satyam*).

The *âtman* which is in me and in the rest of the Universe will be the inspirer of my meditation, the comfort of my life and of my death, in so far as it will reveal to me a world, not contingent but substantial, a form of soul-existence released from the obsession of matter and perfectly beatific. We shall cease to love the things of the world in and for themselves, but shall love them, on the contrary, in and for the *âtman*: not for the love of wife, will the wife be dear to me, but for love of the *âtman*; not for love of children, will the children be dear to me, but for love of the *âtman*.

The *âtman* thus dethrones all the gods and takes their place; with this difference, however, that it needs not

incense or immolated offerings, receives no prayers, doles out no charities, does not allow itself to be worshipped in temples, disdains being transfigured into images, is an iconoclast, and enemy of external cult, and a friend of purity of intentions, of good actions and, above all, of meditation.

This is a form of religion made for the elect and not adapted for the masses. In order that it may be accepted by these latter, the *âtman* will have to submit to being personified, and then it will cease to speak to us its language so suggestive.

Though the doctrine of the *Upanishads*, not satisfying the religious needs of the masses and making God into an abstraction—sublime, indeed, but yet always an abstraction—reduces itself to an esoteric teaching and the religion of a small circle of the initiated, nevertheless, through its demonstration of the existence of the *âtman*, or of a substantial reality, of a *Ding an sich* (thing in itself), it satisfies the highest religious aspiration of man, *viz.*, his desires to survive death through eternity. It is true that the re-entry of the *âtman* into itself, or to use orthodox Indian language, the reabsorption in the *Brahman*, is accompanied by the loss of individual consciousness. "After death there is no longer consciousness," says Yâjñavalkya clearly to Maitreyi. Eternal life, yes,—after death, but no longer individualistic. A great step forwards was made through the eradication of egoism from the human heart and through the enlightenment that the disregard of worldly interests leads to the idea of the Divine. Yet when once the *noumenon* has been substituted for the *phenomenon* and the littleness of illusion has been replaced by the reality of truth, the vanity of all things is indeed not proclaimed; but only the supreme good,—the highest happiness, the greatest value of life,—is revealed to us. The *Upanishads* do not condemn life, but like all the other religions, concern themselves with finding the form of perfect life. They even

aid the natural tendency of man to find every good in Being, and every evil in cessation from Being; in short, they subordinate the search after truth to the claims of life.

And now see how Buddhism batters down the last trench in which egoism has taken refuge, and restores to truth its rights independently of the demands of life. Nothing in the world has been reasoned out with greater courage and freedom from bias. *Being*, Buddha proclaims, does not exist, but *Becoming* alone does exist; "I" is a delusion, an aggregate of matter fatally destined to be transformed, disintegrated into its elements, and destroyed; the basis of life is grief, and life is nothing else than the blind desire to live, nourished on ignorance, breeding everlasting pain.

Life is desire and passion, it feeds on itself without cease, like fire; it has neither beginning nor end so long as it perpetuates itself, across *Samsâra*, from existence to existence, under the iron sway of the law of causality. There is no possible escape from the effects of a bad action. It is in vain for man to conceal himself in the depths of the sea or in the limitless fields of air, or in the remotest caves of mountains; *Karma*, in full bloom, will find him out in his hiding-place and chastise him. It is in vain to resist the moral law which is the law of nature and admits of no modification, much less of evasion, through the efforts of any human or divine power. Evil, soon or late, gets its punishment, even as virtue receives its reward. Besides, even good actions do not free man from the evil of existence, so long as desire, attachment and the thirst for life nestle themselves at the root. True virtue lies in the opening of one's eyes to the vanity and misery of existence, and in the effacement of all limits to the capacity of self-abnegation. It is needful to achieve the miracle of going through our life, filled with benevolence in the midst of the evil-minded, unarmed in the midst of the armed, shorn of every trace of desire in the midst of the covetous. In short,

it turns out that all values are reversed, beginning from the greatest, namely, life, which instead of being the greatest among the good things, becomes the greatest among things evil. It is evident that the goal of happiness of such a doctrine cannot be eternal life, or eternal evil, but only the definitive liberation from the peril of life. This liberation is *Nirvāna*, or the state in which every trace of desire and passion is spent out, all thirst for life is quenched. *Nirvāna* is not indeed a fantastic and mysterious region from which no traveller returns; but it is the experience of every man who succeeds in becoming a Buddha, it is a reality which cannot be described through words but which, proved by Buddha and promised by him to all who reach the end of a saintly life, exercises on the mind a fascination not inferior to that of any paradise or ultra-terrestrial place of happiness.

It is a fact that such a doctrine, contrary to our sentiment and repugnant to our habits of thought, penetrates into our soul in spite of ourselves, extorts our admiration with its magnificent logical precision, and discovers to us unexpected horizons of an incomparable vastness. The more we wish to persuade ourselves about the absurdity of Buddha's doctrine, the more the impression of the revelation of truth is borne in upon us. And this impression becomes all the more legitimate when we have to admit frankly that certain aspects of the doctrine continue to be a puzzle to us. How can we condemn what cannot be grasped perfectly? Who in Europe can say that he has penetrated to the depth of the fundamental Buddhist idea of the twelve causes (*pratityasamutpāda*)? Buddhism, besides, is not merely a theory, it is also a practice. Which European can claim to have practised seriously the spiritual *yogic* exercises peculiar to Buddhism?

We find ourselves, therefore, before a spiritual creation of which we can have only an imperfect idea. But

imperfect as our conception may be, how many are the lessons with which we may enrich ourselves! Let us learn particularly to get rid of the prejudice that utilitarian truths are the only great values of life. Truth should not be a slave to anything, least of all to life. Through Buddha, India offers to us the example of the man who has offered the maximum sacrifice to truth. By the side of the thundering voice of Buddha, even the words of Leonardo da Vinci appear weak, when he said: "Untruth is so detestable that if it should say great things of God, it would detract from the grace of His Godhood, and truth is of such excellence that if it should praise small things, these latter become noble."

The West knows all the experiences, —advantages and disadvantages,—of the mode of life which conforms to natural feelings; it has more or less always lived according to nature, Pagan-wise; but it is ignorant of the reverse of the medal, *viz.*, what things man might gain and lose by living against nature, by eradicating desires, passions and the wish itself to live. This last is the maximum effort that might be expected of man,—the conquest of one's own nature. Buddha achieved it, and his followers tried to achieve it, through a path which is made of righteousness, sacrifice and spirituality. If it is true to say with Carlyle that "Denial of self, the annihilation of self, is the highest wisdom that heaven has revealed to Earth," is not Buddhism the highest wisdom which heroic man, the superman (and not indeed heaven!) has revealed to earth? While self-abnegation and self-sacrifice are preached, and at the same time we add that life is the greatest good, there is little hope in fact that man will feel inclined to throw overboard all that ensures for him this greatest good,—there is little possibility indeed of his renouncing the pleasures of the senses, the desire to acquire wealth, to gain power and to take part in strife, competitions and

wars. Only when life appears in its frailty and vanity, can man annihilate himself, that is to say, can cast off all wishes, give away his money to the poor, curb ambition, suppress hate and anger, and dedicate himself to the cause of science, of fatherland, of the family and of the nearest. Everything that is of the greatest, of the most beautiful and of the most heroic, when examined closely, is not love or attachment to life but disdain thereof, and emancipation from the instinct of self-affirmation, self-assertion and self-glorification. True charity is practised unostentatiously; supreme art is cultivated in and for itself, undisturbed by the individual interests of the artist and through an attitude even opposed to these interests. The genuine hero is the unknown soldier. The presence of the restless ego belittles great values, while the elimination of the ego creates the sublime and the eternal. The apotheosis of life is equivalent to the glorification of the ego, and thereby passions are rekindled, and conflicts perpetuated. Nothing is more complacently self-satisfied, nothing is more intoxicated with itself, nothing more arrogant, than life in its exuberance. The healthy man does not think of the existence of disease and does not wish to hear it spoken about; the robust person cannot imagine himself to be weak and despises weakness. Life which is essentially unstable and fragile and is ceaselessly careering towards death, easily forgets its own frailty, falls under the delusion of being immortal, and acts like the hunchback who forgets his infirmity and flares up against those who reproach him with it. The state of soul farthest from religion and most exposed to corruption, sin, injustice and cruelty, is that of the man inebriated with the fullness and superabundance of life. What indeed will then curb ambition, anger, and the lust for power, except the continuous, implacable reminder that behind health in close proximity stands disease, behind youth old age, behind life death, and behind evil action

punishment? The Indians know this so well that even a political writer like Kāmandaki gives the following instruction to his ideal prince: "Whoever will wish to violate justice in order to satisfy this body of ours, loaded as it is with anxieties and infirmities, and destined to perish to-day or to-morrow? This body of ours, which may for the space of a moment be made pleasant through artificial processes like baths, massages, perfumes, etc., is really as insubstantial as a shadow, and should be considered as a mere water-bubble. How indeed will then strong-minded men allow themselves to be dominated by the subtle enemies called senses, even as a group of clouds are swayed this side and that by a strong wind? The life of mortals is really as unstable as the moon's image in water. Knowing it for such, practise thou ever the good. Having seen that this world is like unto a mirage and may vanish in a moment, the prince allies himself with the virtuous in order to be just and happy." (*Nitisāra* III, 9-13). The true religious sentiment consists, therefore, in denying the interests of self, in clearly visualising the insubstantiality of life, and in opposing thereto a supra-sensible reality. This is why Buddhism, notwithstanding its negation of God and of the soul, is the most profound religious doctrine known to man.

Besides, from the history of Buddhism, Europe receives a great lesson of religious tolerance also. This is a topic fully treated and illustrated in the volume *Dio nella liberto* by Luigi Luzzatti (Bologna 1926, Nicola Zanichelli, Publisher), to which I would refer the reader.

Buddhism, a fruit of India, has been rejected by its mother-country. The Indians have not learnt nor wished to renounce their faith in God and the Soul, and they have preferred as their gospel, the *Bhagavad-Gītā* in which the immanence and the transcendence of God appear blended, and the duty of action is harmonised with the idea of indifference to the fruits of action.

The West is much too logical to be able ever to conceive God as immanent and transcendent at the same time. But, on the other hand, it can assimilate the doctrine of the necessity for action and indifference to the fruits of action. The life of the individual is pain and nothing else but pain, and emancipation from this pain is effected through the extirpation of egoism and of the thirst for life. Besides, beyond the life of the individual, there is the life of the community, and we cannot be sure that this is of no value, especially after the scientific achievements of generations of geniuses and patient workers mostly of the West. We cannot gainsay our civilisation as we do not know what unexpected results we might gain from our admirable method of scientific inquiry and from our mechanical skill that grows more and more astonishing every day. There is no question, therefore, of replacing the scientific laboratory by the cell of the Buddhist monk, nor of our becoming contrite and confessing to India that we have lost our way and that we have everything to learn from her. The two civilisations—the East and the West—are not mutually exclusive but are really complementary to each other; while the one is more spiritual and individualistic, the other is more mechanical and social. Both of them work together towards the same great object of making the life of man on earth better and happier.

Goethe's saying is the sole truth : "God's is the Orient, God's is the Occident," an idea which finds better expression in his verses :

"Wer sich selbst und andre kennt \*  
Wird auch hier erkennen :  
Oriend und Okzident  
Sind nicht mehr zu trennen,  
Sinnig, zwischen beiden Welten  
Sich zu wiegen, lass'ich gelten ;

Also zwischen Ost und Westen  
Sich bewegen, Sei's zum Besten."

["He who knows himself and others will also recognise here that the East and the West are no longer to be separated. Sensibly to be rocked between two worlds is what I consider valid and right; thus to be active between the East and the West is ever the best."]

The intense, conscientious and patient work that is being turned out in the West by all our workers from the scientist to the most humble labourer, raising as it does a monument of civilisation *aere perennius*, is and ought to be a source of pride, as it constitutes a form of the negation of egoism. I shall ever remember with admiration the words which Deussen spoke to me one day at Kiel : "Scientific labour is my asceticism (*tapas*)."

In work we possess an incomparable fountain of purification, and a new method of asceticism; what remains yet to be done by us is to fulfil this work disinterestedly, without regard to the benefits which might personally accrue to us. So much the better would be our work, by how much the more we regard it as indeed not ours but belonging to the community to which its benefits should enure, even while we dedicate our brains and our hands to incessant and ever ripening activity on earth, and turn our eyes and hearts to heaven and to the gates of eternity. Here we have but to work; the harvest will be gathered by the individual in "the region where exists neither earth nor water, neither fire nor air, neither infinity of space nor infinity of consciousness, neither perception nor non-perception, neither the sun nor the moon, neither coming nor going, neither birth nor death,—in that sphere which marks the close of all pain."\*

\* Translated from the original Italian by  
L. V. Ramaswami Aiyar, M.A., B.L.



## SAMKARA AND BRADLEY

BY DR. MAHENDRA NATH SIRCAR, M.A., Ph.D.

*(Continued from the last issue)*

Relations, Bradley truly points out, have no meaning except within and on the basis of a substantial whole. Plurality and relatedness are but features and aspects of unity. From this Bradley concludes the internal relativity of reals. Bradley, by the doctrine of internal relativity of the reals, steers clear of the extremes of Pluralism and unmodified Monism. Pluralism vanishes inasmuch as reals are not the Absolute. Unmodified monism vanishes inasmuch as the reals are partially true.

This reduction of reals to partial truth, Bradley thinks, gives them their proper place in the absolute unity. The partiality of truth is the mark of appearance. A finite being is an appearance. The Absolute is the only truth, the finite beings are not truth in the sense in which the Absolute is. But partial truth is not falsity. It is neither being nor non-being.

The distinction of the absolute truth and the partial truth is not very convincing, though it seems to be indeed an ingenuous conception.

Truth is existence. Existence is attributed to both the Absolute and the finite, and in this common characteristic Bradley leaves no distinction between the Absolute and the finite. The only distinction that distinguishes the Absolute from the finite is the completeness and the integrity of the Absolute.

This topic introduces us to the conception of the degrees of existence. Partiality and fullness of being are indeed a question of degree, but the difference in degree cannot introduce any difference in being. The distinction of degree may be attributed to qualities but not to being. Bradley's conception of the Absolute as fullness of existence and the finite as partiality of existence leaves a gap between the

Absolute and the finite not only in their qualities but in their essence. The finite remains always a finite existence and always represents a partial experience, it can never attain the infinite existence and outlook of life. The Absolute, therefore, is by necessity fundamentally different from the finite and it ever remains so, though its partiality and speciality are sought to be resolved in the Absolute. It is not made definitely clear how the partiality of existence in the finite is resolved in the Absolute. Partiality is truth as much as fullness is; though it may not represent the complete truth, still the sectional truth of partial existences is not illusory. The question here arises whether in the Absolute the partial truths and partial presentations have any meaning or value. Bradley's over-emphasis upon the Absolute leads us to suppose that the partial presentations have not their original meaning and value in the Absolute, for in the Absolute unity these presentations are detached from their context and get fused with wider experience and meaning. Though Bradley thinks that in this assimilation into a wider existence their partiality in meaning and value is lost and that they attain the truer meaning, still it may be asked whether in this assimilation the partial experiences are not completely lost. Partial experiences have a meaning in reference to a finite context, and as soon as their reference is changed they lose their original meaning and in a way their distinctness is lost. The wider meaning which they acquire in reference to a wider subject completely overcomes their partial vision and interest. In this wider fusion the interest in their history of growth and development is completely lost. Finite experience has a growth and history, the absolute experience is eternally com-

plete. The moment the finite experience changes its reference, it ceases to exist or it changes its character completely. It cannot exist in the Absolute in the same sense and meaning as it exists in the finite. The finite experience, therefore, has not its cycle and history complete in the Absolute ; on the other hand, by this new reference and change of context it completely ceases to be finite. Bradley's difficulty has been that he regards finite experience as true, though he does not call it reality. It should be noted that the truth of partiality and the truth of completeness are to Bradley not different kinds of truth though they represent different degrees of truth. The lower degree of truth to Bradley is appearance ; appearance is reality partially viewed. But in the complete view of reality, if the partial presentation of reality is removed, the appearance ceases to exist, for reality is not partiality. Reality, therefore, is exclusive of partialities and of appearances. Appearances, therefore, are not only partialities but must be *illusions* ; if the touch of partiality is withdrawn, the appearances can have no distinctive reality in the Absolute. If the appearances are in the least real, they can be so to finite and divided experience ; they cannot be so in the Absolute ; for the Absolute is Reality and Reality is integrity exclusive of partialities. Bradley has not been able to maintain an even balance between the relative and the Absolute, and his Absolute is an all-absorbing reality in which distinctions are not assimilated but transcended.

Samkara has not attempted the impossible synthesis. He keeps the viewpoints of the Absolute and relative, completely distinct. Philosophers in the West are enamoured of synthesis. Philosophy to them is the end of knowledge, and the end of knowledge is to build a synthesis of our experiences—scientific, ethical, æsthetic and religious. This all-comprehensive synthesis is the quest which has captivated

Western mind. Philosophy is to them the relational integration of the concepts that different sciences advance. This is true especially of Modern Philosophy, wherein reason reigns supreme. Philosophy is in a sense system-building.

In India this rational instinct has all along been subordinated to intuitive soaring, reason to intuition. For system-building is after all a demand of synthetic understanding, but the demand of the integration of concepts is after all no sure foundation, and we are carried off our feet unawares by the deeper currents of the soul.

The Indian mind is, therefore, not so much anxious for a system as for apprehension. System satisfies the intellect ; apprehension, the soul. And truth-seeking, if it is not a fashion, nor a profession, demands a complete freedom from the conceptual limitations. The Indian intellect, therefore, in system-building, has not been unmindful of the deep currents of the soul and has supported their logic by intuitions. Samkara has all along been faithful to this method.

In understanding Samkara we should have his method before us. He appeals to reason. He appeals to intuition in the same breath. Bradley has done the same. But he has not been able to free himself from the rational demand of a synthesis. He is, therefore, alternately pressed by a demand for a rational synthesis and a demand for transcendence. His logic cannot sacrifice the elements of experience, his mysticism cannot have them there. Being pressed by logical and mystical instincts he gives us a system which must dissolve itself either into the philosophy of the naked Absolute or into the philosophy of the concrete Absolute.

We have said already that Bradley's great charm lies apparently in offering us a system which seems to reconcile the widely divergent concepts in a setting which has a room for each one of them and at the same time offers

the prospect of an all-inclusive non-relational unity.

Samkara boldly rejects this theory. His is the firm conviction that value-concepts and truth are not identical. Truth is absolute, non-relational, not in the sense of embracing and transcending differences, but in the sense of completely denying relations. The Absolute cannot contain in it relations, either internal or external. External relations put a restriction to being, internal relations imply self-determination and limitation. Limitation is negation.

Some of the recent writers on Samkara indulge in thinking that Samkara's Absolute has in it a room for the internal distinctions. And they interpret Mâyāvāda in the sense of a modified monism. This is indeed grafting Bradleyean conceptions on Samkara. The relation and distinctions of the empiric order are distinctions true of the relativistic consciousness, and Samkara sees no bond of unity between the relative order and the Absolute. What passes for reality on the relative side of experience cannot be reality in the absolute sense. This, no doubt, takes away from the ultimate truth of relative experience; but if Samkara is understood right, we cannot see how in his sense the relative forms an integral part of the Absolute.

The relative is true in one sense, the Absolute, in another. The relative is true because it appears, the Absolute is true because it endures. The appearance is true in relation to experience, the Absolute is true in spite of experience. Experience and Reality are two things, experience is related to the percipient, Reality is non-related identity. It is not even percipient; percipient is concrete, percipience is abstract; the concrete is relative, the abstract is absolute. Samkara presents side by side the undivided percipience and the concentrated percipient; and the two have not the same reality. The limitation and the relatedness of

the latter cannot be in the former, and the two cannot have the same character. Perfection, growth, experience, value are possible to the percipient, but not to percipience. The Absolute is percipience, and as such transcends all conception of perfection, growth, harmony and beauty.

Samkara's Absolute is, therefore, in a sense the denial of all ethical and æsthetic concepts. The wealth of existence which is a constant charm to our moral and religious life has been denied an absolute value; because they in their nature imply a limitation and restriction of being.

Samkara is, therefore, anxious to set aside the value-concepts by making the Absolute highly abstract without allowing the least compromise between the relative and the Absolute.

The Absolute cannot be relative, because the Absolute and the relative are opposite concepts. The Absolute transcends space, time and causality, the relative implies them. And Samkara cannot agree with those who seek a synthesis of the two, for such a synthesis is well-nigh impossible. This would suppose that the Absolute embraces the relative order in itself and still can transcend it. The relative order is in the non-relational Absolute. This sounds strange. How are the distinctions of the relative order composed in the Absolute? These distinctions should be real in the Absolute, if they are supposed to be contained within it. Such a supposition destroys the non-relatedness and impersonality of the Absolute. And even if they are supposed to be ideal or empirical, they are not *illusory*, they possess meaning: they cannot, therefore, cease to be barriers to the integrity of the Absolute. Since they are ideal, they have meaning for finite minds, but since they are not absolutely illusory, they must be supposed to be contained within the Absolute. Their ideality is partial presentation, their reality is in their being elements in the Absolute.

In this integrity their "solitariness" disappears and therefore they no longer belong to the realm of appearance. But the question can be raised: Have they existence at all in the Absolute or not? If distinct existence is denied, they are not there, being completely integrated in the Absolute. The identity of the *indiscernibles* does not help us, for this is no identity in the real sense. The *indiscernibles* retain their distinctions and the least distinction leaves a gulf between the Absolute and the appearance. Bradley is anxious not to concede any value to the appearance in isolation, for that to him is partial reality, but if the appearance is lost in the complete unity, it ceases to exist as appearance. Reality alone exists, and not appearance.

Samkara perceives this difficulty of intellect to spin out a relation between appearance and reality. And he frankly confesses that appearance and reality can never be synthesised. The truth of relativity is, therefore, to him a different grade of truth distinct from the Absolute. Samkara sees no possibility for theoretic reason to conceive an impossible synthesis between the empiric relations and the supra-relational identity. Naturally, therefore, he conceives a relational order out of touch with the Absolute. This order is, therefore, a separate order of meaning and values—real to the percipient subject, real psychologically, but not metaphysically. Samkara's system is open to the charge of some sort of dualism in the existence of two realms of existence—Reality and appearance. True, but this charge would have been telling, had Samkara attributed to them the same kind of existence. Truth in metaphysical sense is not truth in psychological sense. Samkara draws this distinction between the conceptions of truth. Here lies his genius. He does not declare experience to be nothing, nor does he extend to it, either individually or collectively, the absolute truth.

The intellect may claim the same category of truth of reality and appearance, and is anxious to spin out a synthesis on the ground of the equality of being of reality and appearance. The intellect cannot transcend its own limitations and illusions of thinking by relations, and therefore naturally the demand of the intellect will be to seek an explanation of the appearance in the reality. But this seeking illustrates the tendency of the intellect to attribute always a cause to an appearance. This attribution of an effect to a cause is the limitation of the intellect, and led by this limitation the intellect conceives appearance as grounded in reality.

Led by this demand of the intellect Samkara conceives a relation between appearance and reality; and he opines that intellect must read appearance in Brahman, but this location is true of the intellect, and not of Brahman; for what intellect supposes to be true in its own relative way is not necessarily true of the Absolute. The intellect posits the Absolute to explain the relative order and accepts the relative order therein, but it cannot transcend its own inherent limitation and apprehend reality in itself. Samkara anticipates Kant in the limitation he discerns in the intellect. The attribution of appearance to reality is, therefore, to Samkara an illusion of the intellect, though this illusion persists so long as the intellect is active.

This reference of the relative order to the Absolute is the demand of the intellect, for the intellect cannot conceive the relative or empiric order to be *causa sui* and completely self-existent. The relative must be dependent. This natural bent of the intellect posits a cause for the relative order.

But this native tendency gets a rude shock when the intellect is enlightened by philosophic intuition, and the enlightened intellect, therefore, gets rid of the realistic demand of explaining appearance by reality or finding the causal nexus of the empirical order.

Vivartavâda represents this philosophic vision, for it categorically states that the effect is non-different from the cause, or the effect, as distinct from the cause, is non-real. It is rather the denial of the prevailing causal concept, which obtains in the order of phenomena. The concept is ideal and useful for an ideal construction. It cannot touch reality. Samkara stoutly refuses to link the phenomenal to the noumenal, and he thinks that wisdom begins when we come to feel the illusoriness of appearance. The beauty of Mâyâvâda lies in frankly affirming and denying in the same moment the truth of appearance. The unthinking mind accepts the reality of the phenomenal world because it cannot transcend the limitations of the relativistic consciousness. Samkara's genius lies in declaring that the Absolute is beyond the relative order, and any systematisation in terms of relative concepts falls always short of reality. The intellect which thinks in relations cannot transcend relations and embrace a non-relational unity.

Any attempt, therefore, at reading empirical facts in the Absolute must fail. The explanation of the world-process as issuing out of the Absolute by self-alienation is a concession to the popular instinct ; and Mâyâvâda satisfies the popular and the philosophic demand ; the popular demand by pointing to the dynamism of Mâyâ lying at the root of creation, the philosophic demand by overstepping the realistic aspect of Mâyâ and declaring the creative order as illusory.

This declaration of the illusoriness of the phenomenal world with the collapse of the entire structure of the world of appearance and values, is what disturbs the modern mind and makes it feel dizzy, for it cuts the very ground of the construction wherefrom we derive our inspiration and wherein we find the satisfaction of our being. Mâyâvâda has, therefore, been never appealing either as a metaphysical theory or as a discipline in life.

The world of values—political, social, æsthetic, ethical and religious—determines the lines of our attractions, and life without these attractions is supposed to be empty and dull. And, naturally, a charge is levelled against Mâyâvâda that it takes away the joys from life and banishes the delights of existence. The modern tendency is confined to the charm of values and the delight of creation. It naturally overlooks the deep abyss of the soul, which passes beyond the delight of creation and the joy of expression. It is busy collecting experience, reading meaning in it, and is upheld by the belief that the Absolute is *meaning*, to put it in the words of Count Keyserling. Existence and meaning are identical.

Samkara thinks that to identify existence and meaning is to make existence restricted and limited. Meaning implies a reference besides self. An inward reference is no less a limitation, for either it has no meaning, or it implies a self-alienation. It implies an antithesis in existence, and antithesis is contradiction. Reality cannot involve self-contradiction. To say that meaning is not self-contradiction, but self-fulfilment, is to court the hypothesis of an ever-fulfilling Absolute, an ever-expressive meaning and an ever-realising value. Should it not be noted that such a meaning has the mark of a limitation, such a value, an imperfection?

On the relative side of experience such a meaning appears to be the only valid conception of being, for here the being cannot be conceived without its inherent meaning. Experience is meaning, meaning is existence.

But we cannot resist the temptation of pointing out that the directness and self-evidence of meaning proves nothing, for it is a fact neither direct nor self-evident. Experience causes impressions, impressions have by *themselves* no meaning. On the sense level, the distinction of sensation from a sensitised object, or the distinction

of sensation as a feeling or as an object is more conceptual than sensational. Thought overrules all experience, and is busy to understand experience by categories and even apply them where they cannot be strictly applied. The Absolute must deny relativity of any form, and thought in accepting meaning as Absolute really imposes itself upon reality, for meaning is the main character of thought, but not necessarily of reality. Thought has a limitation, reality has no limitation, thought is concrete, reality is abstract, thought works by relations, reality transcends relations. What is true of affections or sensations, is also true of reality. The affections are caused, reality is uncaused. The affections can be felt, but not known, and when they are known, they are no longer affections; similarly reality can be felt, but not known, for it denies the very relativity of knowledge.

Samkara agrees here with Bradley when Bradley presents the non-relational sentience, beyond and above relations, as the nearest approach of the description of reality. "Being and reality are, in brief, one thing with sentience." Bradley has drawn the analogy from the common psychic life and experience, Samkara has gone beyond that. He opines that nothing in our normal psychic experience can have a correct analogy to the super-normal experience. Deep sleep and concentrated meditation are the nearest approach, but they also are inadequate descriptions, for by the nature of the case the absolute intuition is unique. Sleep is diffusion of attention. The mental being may not be active. The psychic organism may be quite passive. And it has, therefore, the appearance of transcendent stillness, while it is only the drooping of psychic mentality and the apparent stillness of Mâyic dynamism. Sus-

tained effort of concentration can pass into mono-ideism, but is not the absolute consummation.

But even this is not the experience of the Absolute. The Absolute is beyond activity and passivity of mind, mind can pass into a state where the subject-object relation apparently ceases, but this surely is not the experience of the Absolute. The Absolute is not touched by psychic relations or by psychic experiences. The psychic being is to be distinguished from the Absolute. Psychism is fine mentality which can pass into supersensations, super-normal experiences; but even these blessed experiences in expansion of our being and vision are to be sharply distinguished from Vedantic intuition. Vedantic intuition stands as the supreme fact, non-relational without any point of concentration. Psychic vision is penetration into nature's finer aspects and finer expressions of life. It is still a penetration into the finer aspect of life but it cannot reach beyond the relativistic consciousness. Intuition, on the other hand, is the essence of Being. It is the Absolute, beyond space, beyond time, beyond experience—psychic and spiritual. Spiritual experiences, as compared to it, are finer currents of our super-mind, which have meaning, joy and expression; but intuition is beyond such expressions, though it is expression itself. It is beyond the touches of delight, though it is delight in itself. Nothing on this side of experience, however sublime and fine, can even be a shadow of it, for in this height and depth of transcendence our experience is so completely changed that no language can describe it. It is, therefore, absolutely unique and remains ever as such. When one has an access to it, one can only indicate it as that it is not this, not this—*Neti, Neti*.

(Concluded)

## AN INTERESTING CORRESPONDENCE

[In order to truly appreciate the following correspondence, the reader has to be informed of the occasion which gave rise to it and also to remember the relation that existed between the correspondents. At the outset of the first letter below, the Swami speaks of "the hard raps" that he gave to his correspondent. These were nothing but a very strong letter which he wrote to her in vindication of his position, on the 1st February, 1895, which will be found reproduced in pp. 58 of the fifth volume of the Complete Works of the Swami. It was a very beautiful letter full of the fire of a *Sannyāsin's* spirit, and we request our readers to go through it before they peruse the following text. Mary Hale, to whom the Swami wrote, was one of the two daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Hale whom the Swami used to address as father and mother. The Misses Hale were like sisters to him and they also in their turn held the Swami in great love and reverence. Some of the finest letters of the Swami were written to them.]

As will be seen, a few portions of the following have been published before. But we are confident the text does not, therefore, lose in charm. In this the Swami is seen in a new light, playful and intensely human, yet keyed to the central theme of his life, *Brahma-jñāna*.—Ed.]

NEW YORK,  
15th Feb., '95.

Now Sister Mary,  
You need not be sorry  
For the hard raps I gave you,  
You know full well  
Though you like me tell  
With my whole heart I love you.

The babies I bet,  
The best friends I met,  
Will stand by me in weal and woe.  
And so will I do,  
You know it too.

Life, name or fame, even heaven forego  
For the sweet sisters four  
*Sans reproche et sans peur*,  
The trust, noblest, steadfast, best.

The wounded snake its hood unfurls,  
The flame stirred up doth blaze,  
The desert air resounds the calls  
Of heart-struck lion's rage.

The cloud puts forth its deluge strength  
When lightning cleaves its breast,  
When the soul is stirred to its inmost depth  
Great ones unfold their best.

Let eyes grow dim and heart grow faint,  
And friendship fail and love betray,  
Let Fate its hundred horrors send,  
And clotted darkness block the way,

All nature wear one angry frown,  
To crush you out—still know, my soul,  
You are Divine. March on and on,  
Nor right nor left but to the goal.

Nor angel I, nor man nor brute,  
Nor body, mind, nor he or she,  
The books do stop in wonder mute  
To tell my nature ; I am He.

Before the sun, the moon, the earth,  
 Before the stars or comets free,  
 Before e'en time has had its birth,  
 I was, I am and I will be.

The beauteous earth, the glorious sun,  
 The calm sweet moon, the spangled sky,  
 Causation's laws do make them run ;  
 They live in bonds, in bonds they die.

And mind its mantle dreamy net  
 Cast o'er them all and holds them fast.  
 In warp and woof of thought are set,  
 Earth, hells and heavens, or worst or best.

Know these are but the outer crust  
 All space and time, all effect, cause,  
 I am beyond all sense, all thoughts,  
 The witness of the universe.

Not two or many, 'tis but one,  
 And thus in me all me's I have ;  
 I cannot hate, I cannot shun  
 Myself from me, I can but love.

From dreams awake—from bonds be free,  
 Be not afraid. This mystery,  
 My shadow, cannot frighten me,  
 Know once for all that I am He.

Well, so far my poetry. Hope you are all right. Give my love to mother and Father Pope. I am busy unto death and have almost no time to write even a line. So excuse me if later on I am rather late in writing.

Yours eternally,  
 VIVEKANANDA

*Miss M. B. H. sent Swami the following doggerel in reply :*

The monk he would a poet be  
 And wooed the muse right earnestly ;  
 In thought and word he could well beat her,  
 What bothered him though was the meter.

His feet were all too short too long,  
 The form not suited to his song ;  
 He tried the sonnet, lyric, epic,  
 And worked so hard, he waxed dyspeptic.

While the poetic mania lasted  
 He e'en from vegetables fasted,  
 Which Léon had with tender care  
 Prepared for Swami's dainty fare.

One day he sat and mused alone—  
 Sudden a light around him shone,  
 The "still small voice" his thoughts inspire  
 And his words glow like coals of fire.

And coals of fire they proved to be  
 Heaped on the head of contrite me—  
 My scolding letter I deplore  
 And by forgiveness o'er and o'er.



The lines you sent to your sisters four  
 Be sure they'll cherish evermore  
 For you have made them clearly see  
 The one main truth that "all is He."

*Then Swami:*

In days of yore,  
 On Ganga's shore preaching,  
 A hoary priest was teaching  
 How Gods they come  
 As Sita Ram,  
 And gentle Sita pining weeping.  
 The sermons end  
 They homeward wend their way  
 The hearers musing, thinking.

When from the crowd  
 A voice aloud  
 This question asked beseeching seeking—  
 "Sir tell me, pray  
 Who were but they  
 These Sita Ram you were teaching speaking!"

So Mary Hale,  
 Allow me tell  
 You mar my doctrines wronging, baulking.  
 I never taught  
 Such queer thought  
 That all was God—unmeaning talking.

But this I say,  
 Remember pray,  
 That God is *true*, all else is *nothing*,  
 This world is dream  
 Though true it seem,  
 And only truth is *He* the living.  
 The real *me* is none but *He*,  
 And never never *matter* changing.

With undying love and gratitude to you all. . . .

VIVEKANANDA.

*And then Miss M. B. H.:*

The difference I clearly see  
 'Twixt Tweedledum and tweedledee—  
 That is a proposition sane  
 But truly 'tis beyond my vein  
 To make your Eastern logic plain.

If "God is truth, all else is naught,"  
 This "world a dream," 'deltusion up wrought,  
 What can exist which God is not?

All those who "many" see have much to fear,  
 He only lives to whom the "One" is clear.  
 So again I say  
 In my poor way,  
 I cannot see but that all's *He*,  
 If I'm in Him and He in me.

*Then the Swami replied :*

Of temper quick, a girl unique,  
 A freak of nature she,  
 A lady fair, no question there,  
 Rare soul is Miss Mary.  
 Her feelings deep she cannot keep,  
 But creep they out at last,  
 A spirit free, I can foresee,  
 Must be of fiery cast.  
 Tho' many a lay her muse can bray,  
 And play piano too,  
 Her heart so cool, chills as a rule  
 The fool who comes to woo.  
 Though Sister Mary, I hear they say  
 The sway your beauty gains,  
 Be cautious now and do not bow,  
 However sweet, to chains.  
 For 'twill be soon, another tune  
 The moon-struck mate will hear  
 If his will but clash, your words will hash  
 And smash his life I fear.  
 These lines to thee, Sister Mary,  
 Free will I offer, take  
 "Tit for tat,"—a monkey chat,  
 For monk alone can make.

## MY REMINISCENCES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

By KAMAKHYA NATH MITRA, M.A.

It was in the year 1897, the year of my graduation, that I had the rare privilege of seeing at Calcutta the world-famous Hindu monk, the epoch-making Swami Vivekananda, in the house of the late Babu Balaram Bose, a devout *Bhakta* well-known to the disciples of Paramahansa Ramakrishna. I went to see him because I was profoundly interested in his message, though its significance was not yet quite clear to me. A few words may be necessary to explain my interest.

I was inquisitive from my boyhood and the question of religion had a strange fascination for my mind. Just as in these days the predominant interest of my countrymen is politics, so in my boyhood their predominant interest was religion. It was a time of great religious movements and controversies. There was a constant play of action and reaction. On the one hand, there was the rising tide of Brahmoism

with which most enlightened men were in sympathy. On the other, there was the frantic effort of the so-called orthodoxy with its pseudo-scientific and fanciful interpretation of the religion of Hindus. Then, again, there was Theosophy with its Mahatmas, occultism and spirit-world to which many educated people were attracted because they did not like the Westernised outlook of the Brahmos, and further because they felt flattered by the uncritical eulogy of everything Hindu by Colonel Olcott of America and Mrs. Annie Besant of England. It must be said at the same time that a not inconsiderable section of University-bred young men were free-thinkers, rationalists or agnostics who swore by Mill, Comte, Spencer, Huxley and Haeckel and thought that all religions were equally false. Such was my intellectual *milieu* as a boy and a youth. I listened to the discussions of my elders and sometimes took part in

the discussions. Religion to me was not yet a craving of the soul. It was more or less a question of intellectual interest. Though born in an orthodox Hindu family, yet the influence that I felt most was that of the Brahmo Samaj and also that of a near relative who was an out and out agnostic. With the social programme of the Brahmos I had every sympathy but their theology I could not accept. I was swaying between two forces—Brahmoism and Agnosticism.

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It is in this state of mind that I finished my school education and entered college. It is in the first year class, if I remember aright, that I first heard of Ramakrishna,—yet I did not hear of him from any fellow-countryman of mine but from a foreigner—no less a personage than Professor Max Müller himself. I just happened to read two articles from his pen in *The Nineteenth Century*—one entitled *Esoteric Buddhism*, a scathing criticism of Madame Blavatsky and her theosophy and the other *A Real Mahatman*. This Real Mahatman was no other than our Bhagawan Ramakrishna. A new horizon opened before me. A new light flashed forth. And all this happened at a Muffassil town.

About a year after this, I read in the papers all about the famous Parliament of Religions at Chicago and the resounding triumph of Swami Vivekananda there. Who was this Vivekananda? I came to know soon after that he was the chief disciple of Ramakrishna, the Real Mahatman of Professor Max Müller. I was eager to know all about the man and his message. Unfortunately I was not present at Calcutta at the time when the whole city turned out to receive him with the tremendous ovation that signalises the return of a conquering hero. I read, however, glowing accounts of the event and saw that honour such as this had never fallen to the lot of any man on the Indian soil.

From this time onward I read the reports of all the speeches he delivered

at different places in India. I felt that it was the spirit of India herself that breathed through his utterance. Such force, such fire was beyond the utmost stretch of my imagination. Several speeches of Keshab Chandra Sen I had read before. I had great admiration for his style, eloquence and religious fervour. But here was a new atmosphere altogether, a new accent, a new emphasis, a new outlook at once national and universal. Here was Hinduism in all its phases, but how different from the Hinduism of the hide-bound Sanatanists, pseudo-revivalists, the Scribes and Pharisees of India! I was under a spell. The two speeches that impressed me most were his Calcutta Town-hall speech and his Lahore address on Vedanta. When I read the Lahore address I was a B.A. student at Calcutta.

I eagerly waited for an opportunity to see the man. The opportunity came, as I have said, in 1897. I went to see Swami Vivekananda in the Calcutta residence of the late Babu Balaram Bose in company with a class-fellow of mine, Babu Narendra Kumar Bose.

We entered a hall which was full to overflowing. The people assembled there were for the most part students of the Calcutta colleges. They were all seated cross-legged on the floor covered with *durree* and *pharas*. In the centre was the seat meant for Swamiji. I managed somehow to occupy a place in the hall and we all eagerly waited for the arrival of Swamiji. Perfect silence prevailed. A few minutes passed and the Swami stepped in. His gait was leonine and the dignity of his bearing simply royal. His frame was athletic and robust. He had a *gairic alkhal* (ochre cloak) on, his feet were bare and his head, chin and lips clean shaven—altogether a striking personality. He had the look of a man born to command. He was soon seated and then he looked at us. His large eyes beamed with genius and spiritual fire. He spoke in Bengali interlarded with English. Words flowed from his lips

and we heard him with rapt attention. Each word of his was like a spark of fire. His manner was impassioned. It was clear to all that here was a man with a message. His awakening power was wonderful. We heard him and felt aroused. A new spirit was breathed into us. Here was a man of faith in an age of doubt, sincere to the backbone, a dynamo of supernal force. To have seen him was education. To have heard him was inspiration. It was the most memorable day in my life and it is impossible for me ever to lose its recollection.

What did he tell us all? To be strong and self-confident, to renounce and serve. Strength was the burden of all that he said. He poured torrential scorn upon what he called our "negative education" and spoke enthusiastically on man-making. He gave a vivid picture of our country's degradation and the misery of the masses. How he felt for the poor, the down-trodden and the oppressed! If we had a millionth part of his feeling, the face of the country would change at once. He spoke of the greatness of Hinduism and proudly said: "It is my ambition to conquer the world by Hindu thought—to see Hindus everywhere from the North Pole to the South Pole." As he uttered these words I saw in him the very Napoleon of Religion. I saw the warrior's heart throbbing beneath the yellow robe of the *Sannyasin*. Not a mild Hindu at all this Swami Vivekananda but the most aggressive Hindu I have ever seen in my life. He was made of the same stuff of which Alexander and Cæsar were made—only his rôle was different.

Some of his words are still ringing in my ears and they are these: "You must have steel nerves and cast-iron muscles. A moment's vigorous life is better than years of jelly-fish existence. Cowards die many times before their death. An honest atheist is a thousand times better than a hypocritical theist. Don't be jealous, for the slaves are jealous. Virtue is heroism—

from *vir* in Latin which means *man* and which again is the same word as *vira* in Sanskrit."

After about two hours the Swami left the hall and we dispersed in different directions. I returned to my lodgings but the words of the Swami filled the air. I could think of nothing but Swami Vivekananda. There stood his heroic figure whichever way I turned.

I could not resist the temptation of seeing him again and so on the next day I went once more to the house of the late Babu Balaram. On this day there was no great gathering. Swamiji was seated in the verandah on an *asana* surrounded by a group of his brother-disciples. The *Brahma Sutras* with Sankara's commentaries were being read out by one of them and Swamiji passed explanatory remarks here and there. To-day's atmosphere was different altogether. It was all very quiet. Soon after the reading was finished one of the Swami's brother-disciples spoke of the spirit-world and read an extract from a theosophical book. Swamiji at once came down upon him and extinguished him completely. I saw that the Swami was a hater of spookism. He clearly said that all this was weakening and debilitating and had nothing to do with true religion. After this many light topics were introduced and then Swamiji laughed and joked like a child. Here was another mood. I said to myself: Is it the same Swami I saw yesterday—the thundering Swami in dead earnest?

It was about a year after this that I saw the Swami once more—and this time on the platform. Now I was face to face with Vivekananda the orator. The scene was the Star Theatre of Calcutta. The occasion was the introduction of Sister Nivedita to the Calcutta public. The hall was crammed to suffocation. On the dais were seated many distinguished persons. I remember only Sir Jagadis Bose and Sir Ananda Charlu among them. Swami Vivekananda was in his best form. He wore a *gairic* turban and a long-

flowing robe which was also *gairic* in hue. He introduced Sister Nivedita in a neat little speech. The Sister addressed the meeting in a graceful style. Then rose Swami Vivekananda and he spoke on his foreign policy. The speech is to be found in the Mayavati Memorial Edition of his Complete Works. He brought forward a scheme of his future missionary work in the West. The speech was full of fire. Such thrilling voice, rich intonation, variation of pitch, strong and sonorous accent with occasional explosion as of the bolt of heaven I have never heard in my life nor am I likely to hear again. Sometimes he paced to and fro on the platform as he spoke and folded his arms across his chest. Sometimes he faced the audience and waved his hand. His expressions flowed free and fast with the rush and impetuosity of a mountain torrent. His words were like the roaring of a cataract. Well might *The New York Herald* say: He is an orator by divine right. Altogether a more majestic, striking and magnetic personality it is hard to conceive. We heard him spell-bound. Each word was an arrow that went straight to the heart.

Such is my recollection of Swami Vivekananda. To fully understand his message I read subsequently all his speeches and writings and almost all about his Master. There is not a single problem of our individual, social and political life, that he has not touch-

ed and illuminated. He has given a new impulse to the country. So far as I am concerned, he is growing more and more vivid to me with the lapse of years, and I see his stature dilated to-day "like Teneriffe or Atlas." His message is the message of freedom, strength, fearlessness and self-confidence. It is the eternal truths of our religion that he has preached in a new way, in modern terms, and he has also shown how these truths are to be applied to the present conditions of India and the rest of the world. A more constructive thinker and inspiring teacher I have not seen in my life. I do not know a single self-sacrificing Indian worker of the present century, who has not been influenced more or less by his thoughts, words and example. More than anybody else he has made India respected abroad. Many a child of the West has found in his message the solace of his life and the solace of his death. It is true that at the present moment the predominant interest of our country has become political, but the better minds believe with Swami Vivekananda that spirituality must be the basis of all our activities. It is difficult to say what form our national reconstruction will exactly take, it is difficult to predict anything about the future of the world as a whole, but I sincerely believe that the ideas and ideals of Swami Vivekananda are destined to play a very important part in the history of the human race. May his influence grow from more to more!

## BEAUTIES OF ISLAM

BY SISTER NIVEDITA

### I

The secret of Islam seems curiously slow to yield itself up to Christian eyes.

If it is not true that our common conception of the Prophet is of a bold bad man (to quote a distinguished Mohammedan the other day), at least most of us will acknowledge that the

name calls to mind chiefly glimpses of flashing sword-blades, charging horsemen, and the sound of Moslem war-cries in one part of the world or another. That is to say, the boundaries and antagonisms of the Faith are well defined in our thought; but of all that makes it a religion, all that it gives of Living Waters to its people, all that it

offers of tenderness and consolation to the human heart,—of all, in a word, that is positive in it, we have received no hint. Much as though our own creed should be associated only with its *autos-da-fé* or its witch-drownings, while its call to the weary and heavy-laden, its passion for service, and its mystic Gift of Bread and Wine were all forgotten!

Even the missionaries, who have laboured so long and earnestly among the Hindi-speaking peoples of India, have not yet come back to tell us the hopes and fears, the loves and hates, by which these live,—although the two religions are so allied that a Mohammedan mosque is simply a Christian Church, in a climate where the nave requires no roof! (The very sanctuary and baptistery are represented.) Yet one would suppose that if a knowledge of French is advantageous in teaching a Frenchman English, the corresponding equipment would be even more desirable in dealing with such delicate and complex adjustments as those of a national religion!

Not one of us, however, can have gone through the great cities of Northern India without fretful beating of our wings against the bars of our own ignorance. That magnificent rainbow of Indo-Saracenic architecture, whose ends touch earth as it were, at Lucknow and Lahore, speaks for itself of impulse as deep, of faith as noble and abiding, as any that ever lived in the soul of man.

Not alone in the vastness of a Jumma Musjid, nor in the solemnity of the lofty Chancel-screen at Kutab, but even in the tiny Oratory of the Emperors of Delhi, we have some of the world's supreme utterances of the religious sense.

Never can I forget my own visit to this last, surely in truth, the pearl of mosques. It was evening. While the light lasted, we had all examined the decorations—carving of acanthus patterns in low relief of half-transparent marble on the pillars, and the almost

sob of awe with which we had entered into this presence of Purity-made-Visible, had been justified. But now the others had drifted on, and the sun had set. I sat alone on the steps of the mosque. Everywhere the same glistening grey-white marble surrounded me. Even the porch was but a space of it in deeper shadow. Not a sound came from the world without; not a stone of wall or tower obtruded on the eye. Perfect stillness. Utter remoteness. Overhead, the sky, a few stars, and one green bough could alone be seen. I stayed, and stayed, till twilight had deepened into night. In such a place one is alone with God.

It was, in fact, a little bit of the wilderness conquered and kept in the midst of the proudest palace in the world. Oh for that desert where the Prophet was called from amidst the sheep-folds on the hill-sides! Only he who has watched there knows the meaning of that word solitude. Only he who knows that, can even dimly guess at the meaning of the Unity of God.

But if the points of contact between Christianity and Islam are hard to come at, they do nevertheless exist. Perhaps nowhere more completely than in the sentiment about Death.

For we must remember that all that poetry that associates itself inevitably with earth-burial belongs as much to the Mussalman as to ourselves; nay, far more. It is his by birthright, whereas we only ceased to cremate when we became Semitised by our religion. Only those who have lived in communities of both kinds can realise how complete is the loss of him whose body has been burnt, as compared with the abiding memory that clings about a grave. And to the Mohammedan, going at nightfall to place a lamp and fragrant flowers on the last resting-place of the beloved, it is infinite consolation to remember the Benediction of the Prophet. For it is written that he passed by graves in Medina, and, full of that great and solemn sense of the pity and mystery of life, with which his soul was charged,

## PRABUDDHA BHARATA

he "turned his face towards them, and said, 'Peace be to you, O people of the graves! God forgive us and you! Ye have passed on before us, and we are following you.' "

But we have a more direct expression of the thing we seek in that poem translated from the early Arabic by Lyall and quoted by Lane-Poole:

"Take thou thy way by the grave wherein  
thy dear one lies—  
Umm-el-Ah—and lift up thy voice: Ah!  
if she could hear!  
How art thou come, for very fearful  
wast thou,  
To dwell in a land where not the most  
valiant goes, but with a quaking heart!  
God's love be thine, and His mercy,  
O thou dear lost one!  
Not meet for thee is the place of shadow  
and loneliness.  
And a little one hast thou left behind—  
God's ruth on her!  
She knows not what to bewail thee means,  
yet weeps for thee.  
For she misses those sweet ways of thine  
which thou hadst with her,  
And the long night-wails, and we strive  
to hush her to sleep in vain.  
When her crying smites in the night upon  
my sleepless ears,  
Straightway mine eyes brimful are filled  
from the well of tears."

As the mystery of death constitutes one of the two or three great religious motives of the human soul, so the attitude in which it is met must always be an ultimate standard of criticism between rival formulæ.

Now Nineteenth Century Christianity has resulted in two great utterances on this subject: Newman's "Dream of Gerontius" and Whitman's "When Lilacs last in the Dooryard Bloomed." Let me quote from the second of these:

"Dark mother, always gliding near with  
soft feet,  
Have none chanted for thee a chant of  
fullest welcome?  
Then I chant it for thee,—I glorify  
thee above all—

I bring thee a song, that when thou must  
indeed come,

Come unfalteringly.

Approach, strong Deliveress!

When it is so, when thou hast taken them,

I joyously sing the dead.

Lost in the loving, floating ocean of thee,

Laved in the flood of thy bliss, O Death."

Truly a heroic word! The Stoic's sigh of relief, adding to itself the Christian impulse, has borne flower in this cry of passion and welcome, so like the old Norseman's ringing cheer.

And what of the faith of Islam in this regard?

Who that remembers the Mahdi's letter to the Queen can ask? Mad, ignorant outburst as it was, there was yet a wild poetry and a wondrous nobility about some parts of it. "Know, Madam," or words to the same effect, he wrote, "that the men of my nation are not as other men, for God has given to my people a strange love. As others for cool waters, so do they thirst for Death."

Surely, if the sense of manhood and victory with which one faces the King of Terrors be a proof of greatness at all, no creed of the world has more superbly met the test than this of the Arab Camel-driver. Only abject meanness and a hopeless ignorance of psychology could prompt the suggestion that it is the sense-gratifications of the after-state that the Moslem craves. For Heavens and Paradises, mansions and palm-branches, Angels and Peris, are all alike but the Kindergarten toys of imagination, whereby Humanity is brought to recognise its own inner feeling. And of what that deep need of the soul really is, we can learn from a voice that spoke the liquid Erse amongst the Irish mountains seven centuries ago. "What is the good of living?" cried this soul; "Our servants can do that for us! There is nothing worth possessing but the Infinite, and only the Dead possess that!" That is the secret. We all long for the Infinite. Death seems to be the gate, and so it

happens that a man's bearing in face of it is a matter of final importance to us all, and the spirit it produces a supreme test of the nobility of any theory of Truth.

Again, those who study the Koran deeply are forced to the conclusion that what stands for the gospel of an army on the path of conquest was really born of an overwhelming emotion of love and pity for the world. Mahomet's constant synonym for God is "The Compassionate, the Merciful," and he is perpetually reiterating the message of forgiveness of sins and charity to all men. That he himself was as much saint as conqueror, the account of his entry into Mecca proves:

"Mohammad forthwith marched upon Mekka with ten thousand men, and the city, despairing of defence, surrendered. The day of Mohammad's greatest triumph over his enemies was also the day of his grandest victory over himself. He freely forgave the Koreysh all the years of sorrow and cruel scorn in which they had afflicted him, and gave an amnesty to the whole population of Mekka. Four criminals whom justice condemned made up Mohammad's proscription list when he entered as a conqueror to the city of his bitterest enemies. The army followed his example, and entered quietly and peaceably; no house was robbed, no women insulted. One thing alone suffered destruction. Going to the Kaaba, Mohammad stood before each of the three hundred and sixty idols, and pointed to it with his staff, saying, 'Truth is come, and falsehood is fled away!' and at these words his attendants hewed them down, and all the idols and household gods of Mekka and round about were destroyed. It was thus that Mohammad entered again his native city."

Well indeed may our author add:

"Through all the annals of conquest there is no triumphant entry comparable to this one."

This is not the picture of one who lets loose a pandemonium on his fellows.

Further we must remember that if Ali is the great figure of its later history, and military splendour the great medium of its development, at least Arab Religion is no more anomalous than our own in this respect.

For Christianity was preached by a still gentler master, and its conquests—from Peru to Khartoum what record!—have been ten times fiercer and more sustained than those of Mahomet.

The fact is, a new religious teacher always stirs in men that sentiment of Humanity that we of this age are prone to call the sense of nationality, and in exact proportion as that is strong and active, do its limitations become vividly defined. Within its own boundaries, Mohammedanism was the most tremendous assertion of the Rights of the People and of Woman that the world has ever seen: for that very reason, perhaps, it carried proselytism to the people of the land of ignorance with fire and sword.

## II

At this point, however, we come upon a very grave objection that may be urged against the Faith.

Is it not true that its range of characters is somewhat narrow, and that its choice of ideals is therefore too exclusively heroic or chivalrous? Of that Strength-in-Meekness which the Christian reckons the height of human achievement, of the Divine Manifestation of Forgiveness, of the realised Ideal of Suffering Manhood, what trace is there in Islam?

The answer lies in those groups of mourners that one meets everywhere in Northern India throughout the days and nights of the Mohurram.

That the figures of Hasan and Husain stand alone in this respect may be due either to their lack of due immensity to attract disciples, or, more probably, to the fact that the genius of Mussalman peoples has not lain in the way of producing the long succession of martyrs



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and ascetics by which Europe has witnessed to the Worship of Pain. But the ideal is acknowledged. "The Man of Sorrows" receives the passionate devotion of his kindred, in this as in every other system that is true to the heart of man.

It is a wonderful picture that they carry us back to—these huge processions, and these knots of wandering worshippers at May-time. "Hasan!" cries one, beating his breast with his clenched hands, and "Husain!" replies another, making the same gesture of despair. The emotion is real and absorbing. Beside it, our own intermittent observance of Holy Week and Good Friday is slack and pale. The very children are broken-hearted, and some years back an aged prince who led the procession through Calcutta in the last stages of physical exhaustion from long fasting and fatigue, was seen to strike himself till the blood flowed. There is no pretence about this; it, at least, is in dead earnest. But what is the motive from which it all proceeds?

Strange to say, there is, in the case of the Sunnis at any rate, an element in it of national penance. It is a public declaration that "We are of the people who slew the martyrs! We loaded them with sorrows and put them to the death! We!—We!—We!— Oh Hasan! Oh Husain!" Is this not a generous offering to lay at the feet of Justice?\*

How long the Mohurrum has been observed in this fashion it would doubtless be difficult to say. What we do know is that it is more than twelve centuries now since Husain's little camp of thirty persons was pitched on the bank of the Euphrates, during nine weary days, bent on advancing at all costs to answer the call of Korfa to him whom it regarded as the rightful Khalif.

\* It is only fair to say that this acknowledgment of complicity is entirely unconscious. The celebration of the Mohurrum was originated by the Shias and copied by the Sunnis. Aurungzebe was so well aware of its penitential significance that he tried in vain to stop its observance by the latter.

Hasan was already dead of poison, and his brother must have known that death was the only possible end of his own attitude.

Yet as long as the great camp of Yuzed's general barred the way, he could not proceed without swearing what he held to be false, that Yuzed was the true Khalif. And he would not swear.

Amongst all that is impressive in the scene and story, nothing is more so than the perfect absence from Husain of all personal ambition. Because it was false, he would not swear; not for a moment because he desired the Khalifate for himself. And as day followed day, and the cloud of destiny settled down more darkly over the devoted little band, not one murmur of rebellion or impatience escaped the lips of the gentle captain. He could die, when the moment came, as an Arab noble should, but meantime he could neither be treacherous to the Prophet's last intention nor mean in his estimate of dignity and truth.

It was on that fateful tenth morning when the army of the mighty Yuzed came up and once more offered the old terms or instant annihilation, and when he, standing up, laid his statement before the troops,—it was then that was enacted one of the grandest proofs of honesty and courage that the world has ever seen. For Hur, that very general who had so effectually cut off his progress during these past nine days, convinced at last of the truth of the chieftain's cause, threw himself at his feet and prayed his pardon, and then, in spite of Husain's entreaties that they should not court instant death, deserted to his standard with some forty followers!

Husain's force was now seventy, instead of thirty, against four thousand. Battle must be given at once, but Moslem chivalry forbidding the massacre of a handful, single combats became the order of the day.

Husain's, however, was the blood of great warriors, and so it happened that at last he stood, with all he loved, save

one infant son, dead around him, alone upon the field.

The mighty soldier seized the babe, and with it in his arms was once more about to address his foes, when some recreant's arrow was let loose and lodged in the heart of the child.

And then the hero's passion of wrath and sorrow broke all bounds. Throwing the dead baby from him, he plunged into the thick of the soldiery, and even the bravest, it is said, drew back from the sight of that strong right arm, ere he fell, pierced with many wounds.

Is it not a wonderful story? Chivalry raised to the white heat of Religion!

Knighthood consecrated in Sainthood! The proud noble, impervious to insult and outrage, dying to avenge a little child! The great captain who would stand by the right even to the death, though to do so stamped himself culprit to the end of time!

It does not strike the distinctive notes of ethical ideal that we find in Buddha, St. Francis of Assisi, or Ignatius Loyola. But of its own kind the Mohurrum stands supreme, and verily I think that amongst these heroes the angelic soul of Joan of Arc might have found its kin.

## PRACTICE OF RELIGION

BY ANANDA

THE GURU

In our last article we mentioned that the choice of food depends essentially on one's spiritual outlook and temperament. Some foods are suitable to some kinds of spiritual temperament, others to other kinds. But the question of questions is how to find out what is one's temperament. No doubt some guess can be made by a person himself. But there is a great chance of there being mistakes. No, it is no exaggerated fear. Those who have undergone some spiritual struggle already, know that when we come to close grips with our mind and nature in order to mould them properly, they reveal undreamt-of complexities. The mind assumes unthinkable forms. There are so many twists and angles and contortions! The likes of to-day become the dislikes of to-morrow. What we have all along thought to be our predominant tendencies leave us all on a sudden, and their places are taken by quite novel inclinations. Under such circumstances, one's own judgment proves indeed the proverbial broken reed. Some outside help becomes necessary to point us our way. Hence the necessity of a *Guru*.

The modern mind is so unnaturally egotistic and individualistic that it is

inclined to think the necessity of a *Guru* as imaginary. Is not the truth already in us? Is not God everywhere? Why should we need an intermediary? These are all fine sayings, but altogether meaningless. Yes, God is everywhere, and the truth is inherent in us. But it is a fact that in spite of His omnipresence and omnipotence, He has let us wallow in the mire of worldliness for ever so many lives, and in spite of our being the possessor of the treasure of truth, we are continuing as ignorant as ever. It is best, therefore, to give up such meaningless talks and proceed as serious-minded, practical persons. Somehow or other, God has made our access to Him extremely difficult. Again and again the saints of God have declared that it is only rarely that man can realise God. And even then, through what troubles and tribulations! We cannot argue here. We can only meekly accept the statement of the inexorable truth. That is His will,—He would not let Himself be known easily. Knowing this, man has to do his utmost to realise Him. And in this attempt, the need of a *Guru* is paramount.

We know so little of our own self ! And so little, again, of the reality ! It is all mysterious. Knowledge of anything is so difficult to attain ! The little learning that we acquire with the utmost labour of a whole life, has to be done so with the help of so many persons ! Without their help, our progress would have been very slow, if not impossible. And yet the learning and knowledge of even the greatest scholar is nothing, is a mere speck, compared with the infinity that remains yet unexplored. And what is God-realisation ? It is nothing else than knowing this Infinity. It is the totality of knowledge. Consider, then, what amount and kind of help we must have before we can make any real progress in the path of spirituality. This path is beset with innumerable obstacles. It is a narrow path, not straight and broad. Who would tell you if you are going along the correct path or have lost your way ? The *Guru* alone can do so.

Nor is that all. Merely a *knowledge* of the path, mere direction, is not enough. You must also have *power* to walk it unflinching and untired. You require to have a new strength infused into your mind,—a power and a courage that will take you whole through the tremendous struggles of spiritual life. We know we have infinite strength within us. But this also we know that that strength has not availed us much so long, that it is somehow under a magic lock and key and will not come out. The *Guru* infuses strength into the disciple. And when there are difficulties on the way, when we lose our way or get entangled, he graciously places our feet again on the right path and unties the knots that bind us. Even the bravest heart, without these aids, will quail before the difficulties and fail to reach the goal.

Such has been the experience of all who have reached God. The modern outlook in this respect is, therefore, unreal. The fact is, such an outlook is the very antithesis of the spiritual out-

look. The modern man cries out : "What ! shall I make myself an unquestioning slave to another ? Is it not unbecoming of the dignity of man ?" and so on and so forth. But the self that cries out like this, is the creation and sustainer of ignorance. It is by rejecting and transcending it that we gain the spiritual outlook. If we hold on to this ignorance-begotten self, how can we ever be spiritual ? It is a mistake to think that the submission required of the disciple is slavery. There is a great, very great element of freedom in it. For you do not submit to an ordinary erring man. The *Guru* is not a man like us, selfish, bound by desires, caught in the meshes of the ego, and ignorant. His personality is not like ours, finite, narrow and crooked. It is almost one with the Impersonal. His mind is suffused with the Light Divine. His thoughts and actions do not proceed from the little self, the play-ground of passions, but from a Divine source. Even his body is a transformed one. He is the very Ideal personified. To serve him, is to serve the Ideal itself,—the Ideal become man. To submit to him is to identify oneself with God Himself. Through the *Guru*, we come in contact with the *Ista* (the Chosen Deity) Himself. The *Guru* and *Ista* are identical, they are not different. Through the *Guru*, by submitting to him and serving him, we make acquaintance with the mysteries of the Lord and the intricacies of spiritual life. Therefore, the holy books have prescribed that we must realise the Lord by questioning men of realisation and by *serving* them. Without service, their instructions will not fructify in our life.

And here is a deep truth. All words are not the same. There are words and words ; and the same words, again, have different effects according to circumstances. The words of a man of realisation have a peculiar potency. On the surface, they may be simple and commonplace. Any other man perhaps can speak them. Perhaps we ourselves know them. Yet there is a world

of difference. To listen to them from the lips of a man of God is to derive a unique benefit. But even the words of a man of God do not act the same way on all. Much depends on the *shraddhâ*, faith, earnestness and reverence, of the listener. Our *shraddhâ* evokes a great power in the heart of the speaker, and his words become surcharged with a peculiar power, and that power tells tremendously on our life. Much depends on our own attitude. If we are not earnest, even the words of a man of realisation will prove comparatively futile in our life. Hence the necessity of service.

But, it may be legitimately asked : Are all *Gurus* of such transcendental

character? It is true, they are not. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that before we make one our *Guru*, we closely examine him and watch him for long, and when he fulfils all expectations, we may submit to him. Not until then. But once we have accepted him as our *Guru*, even if we subsequently discover any defects in him, we must never pay any attention to them. We must know him as God Himself and give him our whole-hearted allegiance. And indeed, is not God in every man? And what is impossible to a strong faith?

We hope to continue the topic in our next article.

## ASHTAVAKRA SAMHITA

By SWAMI NITYASWARUPANANDA

### CHAPTER XIII

(HAPPINESS)

जनक उवाच ।

अकिञ्चनभवं स्वास्थ्यं कौपीनत्वेऽपि दुर्लभम् ।

त्यागादाने विहायास्मादहमासे यथासुखम् ॥१॥

जनकः Janaka उवाच said :

अकिञ्चनभवं Originating in one who is without anything स्वास्थ्यं soundness of spirits कौपीनत्वे in the state of having a loin-cloth अपि even दुर्लभं rare अहं therefore त्यागादाने renunciation and acceptance विहाय giving up अहं I यथासुखं happily असे live.

Janaka said :

1. The soundness<sup>1</sup> of spirits that springs in one who<sup>2</sup> is without anything, is rare even<sup>3</sup> when one possesses but a loin-cloth. Therefore,<sup>4</sup> giving up renunciation and acceptance, I live happily.

[<sup>1</sup> Soundness etc.—literally *Swâsthya* means the state of being established in oneself.

<sup>2</sup> Who etc.—Who, being established in the perfection of the eternal Self, knows himself as distinct from everything of the world and is, therefore, completely unattached.

This spiritual tranquillity is uncaused. It is not a product like the joy of health, riches, beauty or fame. It is inherent in the eternal Self. So long as we are attached to even the slightest thing, the eternal Self and its joy cannot be realised.

<sup>3</sup> Even etc.—A very high state of renunciation and spiritual realisation is indicated.

Even the wearing of the loin-cloth is indicative of the relative consciousness.

<sup>4</sup> Therefore etc.—Renunciation also presupposes egoism and attachment. True happiness, therefore, consists in realising a still higher state.]

कुत्रापि खेदः कायस्य जिह्वा कुत्रापि क्षिद्यते ।

मनः कुत्रापि तत्त्यक्त्वा पुरुषार्थे स्थितः सुखम् ॥२॥

कुत्र अपि Somewhere कायस्य of body खेदः distress ( भवति is ) कुत्र अपि somewhere जिह्वा tongue क्षिद्यते is fatigued कुत्र अपि somewhere मनः mind ( क्षिद्यते is tired ) तत् this त्याज्या foregoing ( चङ् I ) पुरुषार्थे in life's goal सुखं happily स्थितः established ( अस्मि am ).

2. There is trouble of the body<sup>1</sup> somewhere, trouble of the tongue<sup>2</sup> somewhere and trouble of the mind<sup>3</sup> somewhere. Having renounced these, I live happily in life's<sup>4</sup> supreme goal.

[<sup>1</sup> Body—in the practice of penances.

<sup>2</sup> Tongue—in the study of scriptures, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Mind—in meditation, etc.

The application of body, speech and mind for Self-realisation presupposes imperfection,—the Self has not yet been realised. This is the period of struggle. Complete inactivity comes with complete Self-realisation.

<sup>4</sup> Life's etc.—i.e., Self-realisation or Moksha.]

कृतं किमपि नैव स्यादिति सञ्चिन्त्य तत्ततः ।

यदा अत्कर्तुमायाति तत्कृत्वासे यथासुखम् ॥३॥

( आत्मना By the Self ) तत्ततः in reality किमपि anything whatever न not एव certainly कृतं done स्यात् is इति this सञ्चिन्त्य thinking fully यदा when यत् what कर्तुम् to do आयाति comes तत् that कृत्वा doing ( चङ् I ) यथासुखं happily आसे live.

3. Fully realising that nothing<sup>1</sup> whatsoever is really done by the Self, I do<sup>2</sup> whatever<sup>3</sup> presents itself to be done and live happily.

[<sup>1</sup> Nothing etc.—Because whatever is done is done by the body, mind and the senses accompanied by the ego. The Self is beyond all these.

<sup>2</sup> Do—being devoid of the ego and feeling unattached. The body and mind do the works, the Self remaining unattached.

<sup>3</sup> Whatever etc.—For so long as one lives in the body one has to do some activities, at least such as eating, sleeping, etc.]

कर्मनैष्कर्म्यनिर्वन्धभावा देहस्थयोगिनः ।

संयोगायोगविरहाद्देहमासे यथासुखम् ॥४॥

कर्मनैष्कर्म्यनिर्वन्धभावाः States of insisting upon action or inaction देहस्थयोगिनः the Yogis who are attached to the body ( भवन्ति are ) चङ् I संयोगायोगविरहात् owing to the absence of association and dissociation यथासुखं happily आसे live.

4. The Yogis who are still in the body insist upon action<sup>1</sup> or inaction. Owing to the absence of association<sup>2</sup> and dissociation,<sup>3</sup> I live happily.

[<sup>1</sup> Action etc.—Prescriptions for action or inaction are true only of those who have still the body-idea. To one who is without it, these are meaningless. So long as we are not completely released from the body, i.e., have not fully realised the Self, we have to follow certain prescribed rules, forbidding certain actions and prescribing certain other actions by way of discipline. When the Self is realised, such rules have no meaning.

<sup>2</sup> Association—with the body.

<sup>3</sup> Dissociation—from the body.

One is so completely established in the Self, that even when one uses the body for performing action such as are referred to in the previous verse, one is not affected any way. The association with the body is quite voluntary and under control. There need not, therefore, be also any undue emphasis on dissociation, for there is really no association at all.]

अर्थानर्थौ न मे स्थित्या गत्या न शयनेन वा ।

तिष्ठन् गच्छन् स्वप्नं तस्मादहमासे यथासुखम् ॥५॥

स्थित्या By staying मे my अर्थानर्थौ good or harm न not ( सः are ) गत्या by going शयनेन by sleeping वा or न not ( मे my अर्थानर्थौ good or harm सः are ) तस्मात् so अहं I तिष्ठन् staying गच्छन् going स्वप्नं sleeping यथासुखं happily असे live.

5. No<sup>1</sup> good or evil accrues to me by staying, going or sleeping. So I live happily whether<sup>2</sup> I stay, go or sleep.

[<sup>1</sup> No etc.—Good and evil are products of action done by the body and mind. The results of action do not affect one who is not attached to the body and mind.

<sup>2</sup> Whether etc.—For so long as one is in the body, one does such actions. But they make no difference to his inner consciousness, as they do in the case of the ordinary man or the imperfect Yogi.]

स्वपतो नास्ति मे हानिः सिद्धिर्यत्नवतो न वा ।

नाशोल्लासौ विहायास्मादहमासे यथासुखम् ॥६॥

स्वपतः Sleeping मे my हानिः loss न not अस्ति is यत्नवतः striving वा or ( मे my ) सिद्धिः success न not ( अस्ति is ) अस्मात् so नाशोल्लासौ loss and elation विहाय forgoing अहं I यथासुखं happily असे live.

6. I do not lose by sleeping<sup>1</sup> or gain by striving. So forgoing loss<sup>2</sup> and elation<sup>3</sup> I live happily.

[<sup>1</sup> Sleeping—that is, when inactive.

<sup>2</sup> Loss—of pleasure on account of the non-acquisition of anything.

<sup>3</sup> Elation—due to the acquisition of worldly things.]

सुखादिरूपानियमं भावेष्वालोक्ष्य भूरिशः ।

शुभाशुभे विहायास्मादहमासे यथासुखम् ॥७॥

भावेषु In ( different ) conditions सुखादिरूपानियमं irregularity of the forms of pleasure, etc. भूरिशः abundantly आलोक्ष्य observing अस्मात् so अहं I शुभाशुभे good and evil विहाय renouncing यथासुखं happily असे live.

7. Observing again and again the fluctuations<sup>1</sup> of pleasure, etc. under different conditions, I have renounced<sup>2</sup> good and evil and am happy.

[<sup>1</sup> Fluctuations etc.—due to their instability. Pleasure and pain are not stable, but change constantly with the change of circumstances.

<sup>2</sup> Renounced etc.—Good and evil are associated in our mind with happiness and sorrow. We seek the good and avoid the evil in order to be happy. But one who has realised that happiness and sorrow are really products of circumstances and change with their changes and are not essential to the eternal Self, does no longer care for good or evil and remains established in the Self, in which alone there is real and absolute happiness.]

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### Birthday of Sri Ramakrishna

The Anniversary of the Birthday of Sri Ramakrishna falls this year on Sunday, the second March.

### In This Number

The birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, as our readers may be aware, fell this year on Tuesday, the 21st January. Our February issue, coming immediately after this auspicious occasion, has been largely devoted to the writings of and on the great Swami. .... The number opens with *Discourses on Jnana Yoga* by SWAMI VIVEKANANDA. These are the Swami's unpublished utterances, as we intimated last month. .... *The Rosary* by M.B.C. is a finely fashioned titbit. The writer is a Westerner who came some time ago on a visit to India. Indian experiences have evidently proved very suggestive to her. .... *Swami Vivekananda* by ROMAIN ROLLAND, though short, is a brilliant characterisation of the Swami, quite worthy of the well-renowned artistic genius of the great writer and of his profound understanding of the depths and heights of human nature. The article is the prelude to his *Life of Swami Vivekananda*, to be published shortly in French. .... *The Lessons of Religious India to Europe* by CARLO FORMICHI is another witness by a great Western savant to the spiritual wealth of India. Signor Formichi is a great Sanskritist and a professor in the University of Rome. It may be recalled that he came a few years ago as a visiting professor to Tagore's Visvabharati and also delivered a course of lectures on the Upanishads at the Calcutta University. The article was originally contributed by him to a year-book of the Schopenhauer Society, Germany. .... Dr. MAHENDRANATH SIRCAR, M.A., Ph.D., concludes his *Samkhya and Bradley* in the present number. Dr. Sircar is the professor of Philosophy in the Sanskrit College,

Calcutta, and has several finely written philosophical works (mainly on Vedanta) to his credit, which have all been very well received by scholars in India and abroad. We recommend the present excellently written comparative study to the best attention of our readers. ....

*An Interesting correspondence* is a correspondence inverse between Swami Vivekananda and Miss Mary Hale. We request our readers to peruse the note we have given at the head of the article. The correspondence is unique in various ways,—playful, yet profound, highly significant teaching being given and received in the guise of an affectionate battle of wits. It is interesting to remember in this connection that it was the mother of Miss Hale, who gave the Swami shelter while he was wandering about the streets of Chicago, having lost the address of the office of the Parliament of Religions. The lady, her husband, their two daughters and two nieces, in fact, the whole family, became deeply devoted to the Swami who also, in his turn, had a great love for them. .... We are sure *My Reminiscences of Swami Vivekananda* by KAMAKHYA NATH MITRA, M.A. will be appreciated by our readers. Mr. Mitra is the principal of the Rajendra College, Faridpur, Bengal. May we imbibe the great faith in the Swami, which is his ! .... *Beauties of Islam* by SISTER NIVEDITA, an unpublished writing, is characteristic product of her wonderfully synthetic mind. We do require to understand better our Muhammadan brethren. It is ignorance that causes all misunderstanding. We believe this little article of the Sister will make it easier for us to appreciate Islam. .... ANANDA is thinking of concluding his *Practice of Religion* next month.

### Swami Vivekananda on Western Industrialism

We give below a second instalment of quotations from the speeches and

writings of Swami Vivekananda, bearing generally and specifically on his views on Western methods of life, organisation, and industry :

"I would say, the combination of the Greek mind represented by the external European energy, added to the Hindu spirituality, would be an ideal society for India. . . . India has to learn from Europe the conquest of external nature, and Europe has to learn from India the conquest of internal nature. . . . We have developed one phase of humanity, and they another. It is the union of the two that is wanted." (*Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. V, pp. 145-146).

"Swamiji.—Without the development of an abundance of Rajas, you have hopes neither in this world, nor in the next. The whole country is enveloped in intense Tamas ; and naturally the result is—servitude in this life and hell in the next.

"Disciple.—Do you expect in view of the Rajas in the Westerners that they will gradually become Sāttvika ?

"Swamiji.—Certainly. Possessed of a plentitude of Rajas, they have now reached the culmination of Bhoga or enjoyment. . . . Hence do I say, let people be made energetic and active in nature by the stimulation of Rajas.

"Disciple.—Sir, did our forefathers possess this kind of Rajas ?

"Swamiji.—Why, did they not ? Does not history tell us that they established colonies in many countries, and sent preachers of religion to Thibet, China, Sumatra and even to far-off Japan ? Do you think there is any other means of achieving progress except through Rajas ?" (*C. W.*, Vol. VI, pp. 413-415).

"In reply to the question : what is civilisation, Swamiji said that day, "The more advanced a society or nation is in spirituality, the more is that society or nation civilised. No nation can be said to have become civilised, only because it has succeeded in increasing the comforts of material life by bringing into

use lots of machinery and things of that sort. The present day civilisation of the West is multiplying day by day only the wants and distresses of men. On the other hand, the ancient Indian civilisation, by showing people the way to spiritual advancement, doubtless succeeded, if not in removing once for all, at least in lessening in a great measure, the material needs of men. In the present age, it is to bring the coalition of both these civilisations that Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna was born. In this age, as on the one hand people have to be intensely practical, so on the other hand they have to acquire deep spiritual knowledge.' Swamiji made us clearly understand that day that from such interaction of the Indian civilisation with that of the West would dawn on the world a new era." (*C. W.*, Vol. VI, pp. 417-418).

"You have not the capacity to manufacture a needle and you dare to criticise the English,—fools ! Sit at their feet and learn from them the arts, industries and the practicality necessary for the struggle of existence." (*C. W.*, Vol. VII, p. 145).

"Modern education has changed your fashion, but new avenues of wealth lie yet undiscovered for want of inventive genius." (*C. W.*, Vol. VII, p. 146).

"Going round the whole world, I find that the people of this country are immersed in great Tamas (inactivity), compared with the people of other countries. On the outside, there is a simulation of the Sāttvika (calm and balanced) state, but inside, downright inertness like that of stocks and stones—what work will be done in the world by such people ? How long can such an inactive, lazy and sensual people live in the world ? First travel in Western countries, then contradict my words. How much of enterprise and devotion to work, how much enthusiasm and manifestation of Rajas are there in the lives of the Western people ! While in your country it is as if the blood has become congealed in the heart, so that it cannot circulate in the veins—as if



paralysis has overtaken the body and it has become languid. So my idea is first to make the people active by developing their Rajas, and thus make them fit for the struggle for existence. With no strength in the body, no enthusiasm at heart, and no originality in the brain, what will they do—these lumps of dead matter! By stimulating them I want to bring life into them—to this I have dedicated my life. I will rouse them through the infallible power of the Vedic Mantras. I am born to proclaim to them that fearless message—‘Arise, Awake!’ Be you my helpers in this work. Go over from village to village, from one portion of the country to another, and preach this message of fearlessness to all, from the Brāhmana to the Chandāla. Tell each and all that infinite power resides within them, that they are sharers of immortal Bliss. Thus rouse up the Rajas within them—make them fit for the struggle for existence, then speak to them about salvation hereafter. First make the people of the country stand on their legs by rousing their inner power, first let them learn to have good food and clothes and plenty of enjoyment—then tell them how to be free from this bondage of enjoyment. Laziness, meanness and hypocrisy have covered the whole length and breadth of the country. Can an intelligent man look on this and remain quiet? Does it not bring tears to the eyes? Madras, Bombay, Punjab, Bengal—whichever way I look, I see no signs of life. . . . Open your eyes and see what a piteous cry for food is rising in the land of Bharata, proverbial for its wealth! Will your education fulfil this want? Never. With the help of Western science set yourselves to dig the earth and produce foodstuffs—not by means of mean servitude of others—but by discovering new avenues to production, by your own exertions aided by Western science. . . . Therefore I say, first rouse the inherent power of the Atman within you, then rousing the faith of the general people in that power as much as you can, teach them

first of all to make provision for food, and then teach them religion.” (C. W., Vol. VII, pp. 179-181).

“Nor it won’t do to merely quote the authority of our ancient books. The tidal wave of Western civilisation is now rushing over the length and breadth of the country. It won’t do now simply to sit in meditation on mountain tops without realising in the least its usefulness.” (C. W., Vol. VII, p. 183).

“What you have to do now is to establish a Math in every town and in every village. . . . A well-educated Sādhu should be at the head of that centre and under him there should be departments for teaching practical science and arts, with a specialist Sannyâsin in charge of each of those departments.” (C. W., Vol. V, p. 286).

“We talk foolishly against material civilisation. The grapes are sour. Even taking all that foolishness for granted, in all India there are, say, a hundred thousand really spiritual men and women. Now, for the spiritualisation of these, must three hundred millions be sunk in savagery and starvation? Why should any starve? How was it possible for the Hindus to have been conquered by the Mahomedans? It was due to the Hindus’ ignorance of material civilisation. . . . Material civilisation, nay, even luxury is necessary to create work for the poor.” (*Epistles of Swami Vivekananda*, First Series, 3rd edition, p. 50).

“Why has originality entirely forsaken the country? Why are our deft-fingered artisans daily becoming extinct, unable to compete with the Europeans? By what power again has the German labourer succeeded in shaking the many-century-grounded firm footing of the English labourer? Education, education, education alone? Travelling through many cities of Europe and observing in them the comforts and education of even the poor people, there was brought to my mind the state of our own poor people and I used to shed tears. What made the difference? Education was the answer I got.”

(*Epistles of Swami Vivekananda*, First Series, 3rd edition, p. 59).

### The Divine and the Human : Their Conflict

A correspondent from Brazil has put us a question : *Is human love a help or hindrance to spiritual progress?* This is a question which occurs to many minds and a consideration of it will not be in vain. No categorical reply can possibly be given to it. First of all what is human love? Different minds hold different ideas about it. With some the distinction between man and God has been obliterated. Their spiritual realisations are so high that to them nothing exists except God. Everything to them is Divine. There are others again, to whom love is basely carnal. About these two classes of people, the question is easy to answer. The former class are already men of Self-realisation ; and when they love men, there is nothing unspiritual in it. And with the latter class, human love is of course the very antithesis of spirituality, and it would surely impede all spiritual progress.

But the question, at least the significance of it, arises only with the persons who are between these two limits. *They* are in doubts. They do not know which is which. And it is of their case that we should specially think in this connection. But before we directly answer the question, it is necessary that we consider a few fundamentals of spirituality.

What is spirituality? What is the aim and end of our life? What is the Truth? What is the Eternal Reality? Wherein is the Peace Everlasting? In solving all spiritual questions, these facts have to be clearly determined beforehand. The other day it was said by someone that our life's aim was to become a co-worker of God. To us it seemed almost blasphemous. Did God wait for any co-worker? What we want to point out in this connection is that behind this statement there is an

assumption, which the speaker did not seek to properly examine. He took for granted that men here are for improving the conditions of other men. Is that really so? Is that the quest of life? He has also taken for granted certain wills of God. Yet if we closely question the gentleman, he would admit that these were merely his surmises. Yet one dares to build up a philosophy of life on them! Take again the oft-repeated argument against *Sannyāsa* that God wants men to beget children in order to perpetuate His creation. As if God had declared this intention of His to those people! Here also we find that there is a basic assumption that the world has to be maintained intact. We take things for granted. We do not care to pursue our enquiry further. If, however, we follow truth to the farthest limit, we shall find that the very existence of the world is problematical. We shall find that this vast variegated universe is really nothing. We shall find that what we have hitherto taken for the will of God was nothing such. It was merely a sublimation of our own aspirations. Many of our present assumptions will crumble to the dust and our outlook will change totally. A real answer to any spiritual question must not omit to take into account the nature of the Ultimate Reality in which man finds his eternal rest. And what is the Ultimate Reality? If we are to believe the Vedānta philosophy and the evidences of the greatest saints of all times and climes, we must say that in the Absolute consciousness, infinite, alone, in which there is no trace of otherness, no question of world or humanity or human love. We must all realise that state of consciousness. Without this, there is no peace, no rest. This is the goal towards which all are wending their ways knowingly or unknowingly. If such is the end, what should be the means? Surely we must strive hard to go beyond all duality, beyond all consciousness of the not-Divine. From this it follows that human love also must be transcended.

If we stick to it, we shall be entrapped. We shall lose our way. Our progress would be impeded.

It is sometimes said that by being a householder, by marrying and begetting children, we are enabled to love God in different sweet aspects, as God the father, God the mother, God the beloved, God the son, God the daughter, etc. That is to say human love makes Divine love variegated and thus sweeter, more enjoyable and intense. O sweet delusion! In India and in a less degree in some other countries also, the realisation of God as mother, father, etc., has not been unknown. But what has been the process? Except amongst some obscure sects who have sought to make men or women the emblems of their Divine Beloved, all others have insisted on complete renunciation of all domestic and social outlooks before people could be fit to practice *Sādhana*. One mistake is often made: the way is often confused with the goal. It is true that when we *have* realised God, we can see Him in all human beings and serve and love Him there. But the means of that realisation is not to continue the old natural outlook, but to repudiate it strongly. Those who have tried to realise men as Divine, know what a tremendous struggle it means. Behind the normal, natural outlook are the *Samskāras* of innumerable births in which our love-relations with other men and women have been mainly and essentially through the body. We have never sought to perceive or love and serve them as spirit, above body and mind, but always as body and mind (superficial mind). It is very, very hard to get over those associations. Our mind *would* take men and women as physical and mental only. These tendencies have to be conquered and destroyed after hard struggle. And as the very first step we must desist from those feelings, thoughts and actions which remind us of their humanity and not Divinity. And of these the love-relations are the most pernicious, because these are the

deepest, and have always in all our previous lives found expression in and through the body. A smile, a tear, a caressing word,—how much do not these mean to the ordinary mortal! And as he seeks to eliminate the human, the physical element from his love, and see the Divine shine in and through the smile and tear, his mind refuses to relinquish the old associations. Here is the tremendous difficulty. So human love must first of all be eschewed, in order to spiritualise it. Practically considered, it is impossible for householders to spiritualise their domestic relations by merely continuing the normal relations. During the period of *Sādhana*, a strenuous effort should be made to realise God as beyond all these domestic felicities. Only when the perception of Him had deepened, would we be able to feel His presence also in our parents, brothers, sisters, etc. Otherwise there is a great risk of our confusing the Ideal with the real.

From the above remarks, the answer to our correspondent can be easily inferred. For the ordinary *Sādhakas*, spiritual aspirants, it is best that they do not bother about human love. Let them give themselves heart and soul to God as He is in Himself. That will purify his mind and clarify his vision. If he mixes in human love in order to make it an ally in the path of spirituality there is every chance of there being *moha*, infatuation, the blurring of the spiritual vision and eventual fall. One must avoid carefully all these experiments. But one has always the right and privilege of serving others as God Himself—Mind, as *God*, and not as man; and there must be no reference to the usual love-relations. Do not let the human elements creep in. These are fraught with danger.

We must mention that what we have written above is meant only for sincere spiritual aspirants and not for the average man. There are many whom the touch of human love redeems. There are many again, whose life would wither up without the waters of human

love. Most men are of this condition. Their duty is assuredly to conceive those love-relations in the best possible spirit, to purify, ennoble and exalt them. That would be to their good. And it is necessary. But beyond even this noble state, is the life spiritual. When one has been sated with human love, when the finite life and reality has made one restless to escape their limitations, when one's heart yearns for the Infinite and the Eternal, even as the mother cries for her departed child, there begins the spiritual life. And then the so-called human love appears to one as a dark, deep, weed-smothered well, to quote the significant description of Sri Ramakrishna. Like the famous

*Chátaka* bird, one would cry for the rain-drops in order to slake one's thirst and would not drink from rivers or ponds even though they be full.

The modern age with its cheap idealism, its secularity and tendency to cover the corpse with flowers, has been trying to create a glamour about the normal life, the life of the senses and of the surface mind. Spiritual aspirants, if they are serious and sincere, should beware of its pitfalls. Men have tried in every age to idealise the real, to shut their eyes to the grim reality that this world with all its joys and sweets is after all false. But alas, it has not succeeded yet, and it will never succeed.

## REVIEW

SWARAJ—CULTURAL, AND POLITICAL.  
By Pramatha Nath Bose, B.Sc. (London).  
W. Newman and Co., Ltd., Calcutta. 290 pp.  
Price Rs. 4.

We welcome the timely publication of *Swaraj—Cultural and Political*. The author is a well-known man of letters and is by no means a stranger to those who take interest in books that give Indian interpretation of things Indian.

The perusal of the book will impress the reader with the author's intimate knowledge of and profound sympathy with Hindu culture. He would have us believe that the solidarity of Indian cultural life and the structural unity of Indian social life are actually disintegrating under the influence of Western civilisation. It is apparently clear that Mr. Bose does not see eye to eye with those who hold that India is in the process of becoming a nation.

The political India in the past had a chequered career, but the cultural India had an even history, and with the changing forces of time, though there has been the advent of new ideas, yet India has wonderfully preserved her cultural unity and cultural independence.

This shows that the heart of India is still sound. Indian cultural ideas are virile. They can inspire Indian minds for things Indian. The book will not fail to present

the Indian ideals when the time is ripe for their close study and reaffirmation in Indian life.

The book covers a large ground; it gives a history of the past, it throws out a perspective of the future. All the chapters are mines of information. The author gives a touching picture of how things Indian were destroyed, but happily he does not finish the book with a pessimistic note. He closely considers the prospect of an imitation Swaraj, its promises and short-comings. "Is Imitation Swaraj Desirable?" and "Is Political Swaraj Possible?" would be read with interest and profit by those who are anxious to implant a Western constitution on an Eastern soil. Mr. Bose discusses threadbare the points in favour and against the revival of cultural Swaraj and sees in it the desired end and consummation of our efforts. Indian culture has been synthetic, and the cultural synthesis is spiritual. India has never favoured the dynamic materialism of the West, and India has wonderfully conserved the spiritual, ethical and æsthetic values in her culture, and has not allowed these values to be dominated by material and economic values. Indian cultural ideas, therefore, present a singular contrast to the present-day civilisation which sees its strength in industrialism and armaments. The time has come for a wise

decision. Should India lose her soul and be cast adrift from the moorings of her intuition, vision and construction? Mr. Bose has given the only possible answer in the clear negative.

Mr. Bose has raised issues of wide magnitude and it is not possible here to enter into a thorough discussion of them. The book will be a helpful study to the rebuilders of India's political and cultural history. While dissociating ourselves from the Western ideas of progress and prosperity, we cannot help thinking that India in the whirlpool of modern civilisation cannot spread her cultural ideas. The cultural conquest should be checked. India must be spiritually efficient as she desires to be politically efficient, and that to-day Indian ideals are not appreciated is due to the lack of the spiritual insight of the moderns. To uplift herself India needs the reaffirmation of her spiritual ideas which, instead of weakening the material and political progress, will put India in the right track. India suffered a dementia in the recent past in her spiritual and political life, and now that the political India is astir with life, we hope she will direct her forces in a way which can revive her spiritual energies and rebuild her political system suited to her genius. India solved this problem in the past, as pointed out by Mr. Bose. Should the lesson be lost upon us when we are about to inaugurate a new chapter in Indian history?

**THE BRAHMA SAMAJ (A SHORT HISTORY).** By Manilal C. Parekh, B.A., *Oriental Christ House, Rajkot, Kathiawad.* 287 pp. Price cloth Rs. 4, board Rs. 3.

The book is primarily a record of the thoughts and the deeds of the leaders of the Samaj. The development of the Samaj into branches and sub-branches out of the trunk implanted by Rammohan has been clearly traced by the author. The excellences and limitations of each section and the contributions of its organisers have also been stated. The book further deals with the various reforms inaugurated by the Samaj, its missionary activities and its spread in other provinces of India. It may serve as a hand-book of useful information regarding the Samaj.

The author has already made himself known to the literary public by producing short lives of the founder and the third great leader of the Samaj, the first of which we reviewed in the August number of P. B.

He was connected with the Samaj for more than a decade and was ordained a missionary of the Navavidhan. Later in life he adopted the Orthodox Christian faith. But he still remembers with gratitude the early source of his inspiration and initiation into religious life, and offers the book to the public as a tribute of love to the Samaj.

The author represents the Samaj as an inter-religious movement of great national significance. Through it Hinduism is to attain its fulfilment in Christ Jesus and bring about that religious and cultural unity which is essential for the national reconstruction of New Hindustan. Keshab, the greatest leader of the Samaj, has contributed most towards this culmination. His New Dispensation is only a step short of the goal. Instead of making it Christocentric, as intended by Keshab, his followers have made it Keshab-centric. The Sadharan Brahma Samaj has miserably failed to run the destined course because of its secular and rationalistic tendencies. The only hope of the Navavidhan as of the whole Samaj lies in its acceptance of Christ.

But does the salvation of the Hindus or of India lie in the Christianisation of Hinduism, or does Christianity require Hindunisation for its fulfilment? Of all the religions in the world, Hinduism has been most tolerant and comprehensive. Because it stands not on the authority of persons, but on eternal principles, the self-revealed truths known as the Vedanta. To it, the different religious systems are but adaptations of these truths, as realised by their founders, to the varying conditions of the world. Harmony of religion is not possible on the narrow basis of personal authority, but on the common ground of the universal truths. Let the Christians stand on them free from all dogmatism and they will be in a position to accept the Hindu sages in the same spirit in which the Hindus accept theirs. Hinduism has had propiets enough to provide it with all possible types of spirituality. It can receive others into its bosom, if need there be. It can also live without the prophets.

Because of this universal feature of Hinduism, it has been remarkable for its power to reconcile diverse faiths and cultures. The Brahma movement grew out of this reconciliatory spirit. But though based by the Raja on the eternal rock of the Vedanta, it was carried off its feet under the influence of the Western thoughts and

the Christian ideas. Of all the pioneers of the Movement, Keshab seems to have been most open to this influence by his nature and culture. He does not represent the Hindu religion, as the author assumes. His religious ideas were formed by his study of the Christian books and the current philosophy of Great Britain and France and his contact with the Christian Missionaries. He had little knowledge of Hindu philosophy and scriptures. His devotion to the Christian ideals did not grow out of a mature understanding of the comparative values of Hinduism and Christianity. The Brahma Movement has done a real service to the country by checking the onrush of Christianity and the Western civilisation and by liberalising Hindu orthodoxy. It has formed a midway between Westernism and Conservatism.

**STUDENT LIFE IN THE WEST.** By A. J. Appasamy, M.A. (Harvard), D.Phil. (Oxon.). *Christian Literature Society for India, Madras.* 83 pp. Price 4s. 8.

This little book has been prepared, as the author says in his preface, for the use of those who would like to know something of the university life in America and Europe. The author who is an M.A. of the Harvard University and D. Phil. of Oxford, is in a position to write with first-hand knowledge on the subject. The book furnishes intimate pictures of the students' life, their methods of study, the teaching methods, the educational ideals of England and America with comparative remarks on those in India, teachers and their qualifications and duties, their position, academic discipline, etc. Much information is supplied on those and other allied topics.

The book is written in a pleasant and simple style. It is not learned, but is

nevertheless quite interesting and profitable-reading.

**LETTERS FROM A FATHER TO HIS DAUGHTER.** By Jawaharlal Nehru. *Allahabad Law Journal Press, Allahabad.* 121 pp. Price not mentioned.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who is up for the independence of his country, has, to our pleasant surprise, revealed himself as an unconscious writer of excellent juvenile literature. Some letters were written by him to his daughter of 10 years, who was away; and the loving father, watchful of the education of his little daughter, though himself caught in the whirlpool of politics, took this opportunity to imperceptibly increase her general knowledge and widen her outlook of thought. These letters, giving a brief account of the early days of the world, will be highly profitable-reading, not only to the children of the age of his daughter, but also to those who are not quite so young, and they will be all grateful to the little child whose love could make the busy father produce such an excellent treatise. The subjects treated in the letters cover a wide ground, such as "How Early History was Written," "The Making of Earth," "The First Living Things," "The Coming of Man," "How Different Races were Formed," "The Relationships Of Languages," "The Patriarch—How He Began," "The Early Civilisations," and "The Ramayana and the Mahabharata," to mention only a few, and they are written in a way which makes a direct appeal to the child-mind. Though the letters were originally written without any idea of publication, the publisher has done well to bring them out in book-form. Sixteen illustrations have enhanced the value of the book. The get-up is excellent.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### R. K. Mission Relief Work

The Secretary of the R. K. Mission has sent us the following for publication :

The public are aware that the flood relief work of the Ramakrishna Mission in Assam and Midnapur was finished in November last. The distribution of food-stuffs in Akyab (Burma) was closed on the 15th December, but hut-construction has been taken up. We give below an abstract of the receipts and disbursements of the flood relief

work in Assam and Midnapur and cholera relief work in Burdwan, audited by Mr. N. K. Majumdar, M.A., G.D.A., Hony. Auditor of the Mission. A detailed report of the whole work will be published when the work in Akyab is over.

Receipts: From Provident Fund—Rs. 3,773-4-0; by donation—Rs. 36,387-4-0; sale proceeds—Rs. 574-15-9; Total—Rs. 40,735-7-9.

Disbursements: Rice for recipients—Rs. 23,751-4-0; other food grains—Rs. 13-11-3;

fodder—Rs. 80-0-0; sacks—Rs. 6-0-0; clothes—Rs. 1,016-13-9; transit charges—Rs. 1,706-6-0; travelling and inspection charges—Rs. 862-9-7½; equipment—Rs. 121-8-3 workers' expenses—Rs. 891-7-0; establishment—Rs. 299-8-9; stationery—Rs. 54-15-6; postage, telegram and m.o. commission, etc.—Rs. 209-1-6; printing—Rs. 24-3-6; miscellaneous—Rs. 29-10-10½; pecuniary help—Rs. 91-5-0; medical relief—Rs. 268-11-6; agricultural relief—Rs. 40-0-0; aids for building houses—Rs. 4,303-2-9; Total—Rs. 33,770-7-3. Balance deposited to the Provident Fund—Rs. 6,965-0-6. Total—Rs. 40,735-7-9.

**R. K. Seva Samsad, Harinagar,  
Midnapur, Bengal**

A correspondent has sent us the following report of the above institution established about nine years back in a backward village of the Ghatal subdivision in the district of Midnapur, Bengal. It has done excellent work during these few years towards the spreading of education, sanitation and religion in a considerable number of villages along with the improvement of their economic conditions.

In 1920, Swami Prashantananda, a monk of the Ramakrishna Order, was sent by Swami Saradananda and he visited several villages of the Ghatal and Midnapur subdivisions. Moved by the backwardness of the villages in every respect and inspired by the great Swami, Swami Prashantananda organised the above institution with the help of some energetic men of the locality in order (i) to spread education among the masses without distinction of caste and creed, (ii) to teach the modern ways of sanitation among the people and to help them in all possible ways to adopt them, (iii) to help the poverty-stricken people for the adoption of means whereby their economic difficulties might be minimised to some extent, and lastly (iv) to diffuse religious and moral culture among the public. The Swami may be said to have achieved great success in all these departments of work.

(i) *Education*: The Swami reorganised several Middle and Upper Primary Schools that were about to be extinct and established a few new Primary Schools. It is interesting to note that one of the reorganised Upper Primary Schools has now been raised to the status of a High English School. Of the newly founded schools, two Night Schools for labourers are nicely continuing, some have been extinct and some are in a

moribund condition for want of funds and proper supervision. In 1920, a Women's School was started and turned into a Co-operative Mahila Samiti in 1928.

(ii) *Sanitation*: A few Co-operative Health Societies have been established in several villages. Harinagar which has a Co-operative Health and Anti-malarial Society, has improved so much in respect of health that it has become an ideal village in the district of Midnapur. Lantern lectures were arranged in populous places regarding the origin, spread and the means of prevention of various diseases as well as regarding maternity and child welfare. The want of supply of pure water is a potent cause of insanitation in villages. In order to remove it the Swami had several ponds re-excavated and arranged to sink 28 tube-wells in different villages within the last one year. He trained also three young men to sink tube-wells and they are doing this work creditably.

(iii) *Economic Help*: The Swami's attempts at saving the poor peasants from borrowing money at unusually exorbitant rates of interest are indeed unique. As a result of his strenuous labours for the last seven years, he has established more than a hundred Co-operative Credit Societies and a Co-operative Central Bank in those parts. The peasants used to borrow money at an interest varying from Rs. 36/- to Rs. 75/- per cent per annum; but now to their great relief, they can do that at an interest of Rs. 12½ per cent per annum only. Besides, the profit also of those Credit Societies go to the borrowers. Transaction of about three lacs of rupees is made by these societies which cover about four hundred villages with an area of four hundred square miles.

(iv) *Religion*: The Swami is keen about spreading religious and moral culture among the masses, and with this object he goes from village to village and holds discourses on religion and morality. He has established a small library at Harinagar with a collection of religious and cultural books. He also arranges lectures and discourses by the monks of the Ramakrishna Order at different times in different places.

It is worthy of note that the Ramakrishna Seva Samsad with its centre at Harinagar is doing yeoman's service to the masses with those various institutions covering an area of about 450 square miles and also that this central insignificant village has been converted into an ideal one within the short period of the last nine years. Before 1920

this village was a permanent abode of malaria and various other diseases which were gradually decimating the population. The poor peasants, over head and ears in debt, were miserably dragging on their existence. There were no proper educational institutions and proper roads and paths. But at present the village is blessed with a Women's School, a Labourers' Night School, a Co-operative Credit Society, a Co-operative Health and Anti-malarial Society, a Women's Association, a Post Office, a Public Library, a Village Defence Party and a deep Tube-well. The roads and paths are being reconstructed. Diseases are scarce. Attempts are also being made to found a dispensary. All these institutions of service have elicited great admiration from all official and non-official visitors.

The Swami's work is certainly inspiring.

#### **Sri Ramakrishna Students' Home, Delhi**

The activities of the Delhi centre of the Ramakrishna Order are growing day by day. In addition to the Math started about 2½ years ago, a charitable Dispensary was also opened near New Delhi about a year back. Last October a Students' Home was been opened near the Jumna River close by the colleges and the University in a new house given by Lala Lachmandas, a local municipal commissioner and a generous Rais of the City, for free use. If the work satisfactorily increases, he may permanently place it at the disposal of the Mission. A strong committee of some prominent men of Delhi with Rai Saheb Shri Ram Sharma as President has been formed to run the Home and secure for it a permanent fund, site, and building. Professors, Teachers, Principals, Doctors and others are taking keen interest in it. The Home is also growing to be a centre of students' activity and other forms of social service.

#### **R. K. Mission Centre, Singapore**

The First Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Centre, Singapore, for the years 1928-29 is to hand. When Swami Sharvananda visited Singapore in 1913, he was cordially welcomed by the people. His second visit in 1919 was crowned with great success. On that occasion he delivered many lectures explaining the ideas, ideals and activities of the Ramakrishna Mission. Since that time the Singapore public had been wanting a monk from the Ramakrishna

Mission to work amongst them. In May 1928 Swami Adyananda was deputed by the Governing Body of the Mission to start a centre there. The Centre was started in the beginning of 1928 and was duly registered under Ordinance (Companies') 155, Section 290.

During the period of 13 months, covered by the report, the Swami Adyananda delivered many lectures and conducted weekly services. Studies on the Gita and the Upanishads and Swami Vivekananda's works were made during the services. The Birthday Anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda were also celebrated. The Library, though small, was of great use to the public.

The Singapore Centre's activities will be as follows: (a) Missionary Work; (b) Educational Work by starting Day School for boys and Night School for the labourers; (c) Charitable Work by serving the poor in every way possible. To have a permanent building of the Mission, a sub-committee was formed. It is expected that the project will materialise soon and greater activities will be undertaken.

The income of the Ashrama under various headings amounted to \$3,130.85. The total expenditure came to \$2,602.77, leaving a balance of \$528.08.

We are much gratified to go through the report of work already done. Singapore is an important international city. The members of the advisory committee of the Centre are men of light and leading, and with their co-operation we believe that Swami Adyananda will be able to do greater and greater services to the citizens of Singapore.

#### **Swami Paramananda's Activities in U.S.A.**

We have received the following report of the activities of Swami Paramananda:

Swami Paramananda's work in America has taken another forward step. Those who follow with devout satisfaction the widening influence of Sri Ramakrishna's message to the world cannot but review the Swami's growing achievement with deepest appreciation. In 1908 he established the Vedanta Centre of Boston; in 1914 it was installed in large and imposing headquarters on one of the loveliest parkways of the city. In 1920 extensive additions were made to this already spacious house.

In 1923 further expansion carried the Swami across the continent to found an Ashrama in the milder climate of Southern



California near Los Angeles. He procured 140 acres of richly planted land. On this he has erected gradually a Temple of the Universal Spirit, a large Library, living quarters and book-room, all joined by arched cloisters, two large dwelling-houses, 14 cabins, a cottage, two garages and two barns. In this mountain retreat lying in a crescent of hills belonging to the Sierra Madre range live twenty-five or thirty zealous devotees under the Swami's inspiration and guidance.

Drawn by the power of the teaching and the rare beauty of the place, the public has invaded more and more the quiet of the Ashrama. To safeguard its character as a retreat the Swami has acquired now a town house in one of the finest residential sections of Los Angeles. Lovely gardens and handsome residences surround it on every side. The house itself stands in a charming garden and the impression is of a flower-grown, tree-shaded suburb rather than of a crowded city. There are seventeen large rooms in the new house besides six bathrooms and still other rooms with bath over the garage. The modern improvements visible everywhere bear witness to the far point convenience has been carried in American life. Touch one electric button and lights shine out from every room in the house. Touch another and the whole garden is lighted up. Push a third and a furnace in the cellar is kindled; a fourth or fifth

directs the heat to different parts of the house.

This new home of the work will be dedicated by the Swami in December when he returns from Boston. Many of the public activities of the Ashrama will be transferred there. The Los Angeles Branch Library which has occupied rooms in a studio building down town for several years will be moved to the new quarters. The Pasadena Branch Library will continue as it is. Its large attractive studio offers a perfect background for the weekly class held there and for the sale of Vedanta literature and Ashrama Arts and Crafts.

The work at the Boston Vedanta Centre is growing daily more fervent and vital. Its Temple of the Universal Spirit counts a numerous congregation every Sunday and Tuesday. The Ashrama at Cohasset purchased last spring by the Swami to supplement the Boston Centre is closed for the winter, but I am sure many will still go there to enjoy the beauty of the snow-weighted trees and the white-blanketed fields.

It requires tireless energy on Swami Paramananda's part to carry forward four Centres at such distant points. Nothing could testify more eloquently to his ardor than the fact that during the past year he has made the four-day journey across the continent fourteen times.

*"We Hindus have now been placed, by the will of the Lord in a very critical and responsible position. The nations of the West are coming to us for spiritual help. A great moral obligation rests on the sons of India to fully equip themselves for the work of enlightening the world on the problem of human existence. . . . The eyes of the whole world are now turned towards this land of ours for spiritual food, and India will have to work at present for all the races. For her alone is the highest ideal for mankind. Western scholars are now struggling to understand that ideal. But that was found out long ago in India. That ideal has been kept enshrined in our Sanskrit Literature and Philosophy and to teach that has been the characteristic of India all through the ages."—Swami Vivekananda.*

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

## DISCOURSES ON JNANA YOGA

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Jnâna teaches that the world should be given up, but not on that account to be abandoned. To be *in* the world, but not *of* it, is the true test of the Sannyâsin. This idea of renunciation has been in some form common to nearly all religions. Jnâna demands that we look upon all alike, that we see only “sameness.” Praise and blame, good and bad, even heat and cold, must be equally acceptable to us. In India there are many holy men of whom this is literally true. They wander on the snow-clad heights of the Himalayas or over the burning desert sands, entirely unclothed and apparently entirely unconscious of any difference in temperature.

We have first of all to give up this superstition of body; we are not the body. Next must go the further superstition that we are mind. We are *not* mind, it is but the “silken body,” not any part of the soul. The mere word “body,” applied to nearly all things, includes something common among all bodies. This is *existence*. Our bodies are symbols of thought

behind, and the thoughts themselves are in their turn symbols of something behind them, *i.e.*, the One Real Existence, the Soul of our soul, the Self of the universe, the Life of our life, our *true* self. As long as we believe ourselves to be even the least different from God, fear remains with us; but when we know ourselves to be the One, fear goes: of what *can* we be afraid? By sheer force of will, the Jnâni rises beyond body, beyond mind, making this universe zero. Thus he destroys Avidyâ, and knows his true self, the Atman. Happiness and misery are only in the senses, they cannot touch our *real* self. The soul is beyond time, space and causality, therefore unlimited, omnipresent.

The Jnâni has to come out of all forms, to get beyond all rules and books and be his own book. Bound by forms, we crystalize and die. Still, the Jnâni must never condemn those who cannot yet rise above forms. He must never even *think* of another, “I am holier than thou.”

These are the marks of the true

Jñāna-Yogi: (1) He desires nothing, which is ever ready to swoop down—save to know. (2) All his senses are under perfect restraint; he suffers everything without murmuring, equally content if his bed be the bare ground under the open sky, or if he is lodged in a king's palace. He shuns no suffering, he stands and bears it;—he has given up all but the Self. (3) He knows that all but the *One* is unreal. (4) He has an intense desire for freedom. With a strong will, he fixes his mind on higher things and so attains to peace. If we know not peace, what are we more than the brutes? He does everything for others, for the Lord, giving up all fruit of work and looking for no result, either here or hereafter. What *can* the universe give us, more than our own soul? Possessing that, we possess *all*. The Vedas teach that the Atman, or Self, is the One Undivided Existence. It is beyond mind, memory, thought, or even consciousness as we know it. From it are all things. It is That, through which (or because of which) we see, hear, feel, think. The goal of the universe is to realize oneness with the "Om," or One Existence. The Jñāni has to be free from all forms, he is neither a Hindu, a Buddhist, nor a Christian, but he is all three. All action is renounced, given up to the Lord; then no action has power to bind. The Jñāni is a tremendous rationalist, he denies *everything*. He tells himself, day and night: "There are no beliefs, no sacred words, no heaven, no hell, no creed, no church—there is only Atman." When everything has been thrown away until what cannot be thrown away is reached, that is the Self. The Jñāni takes *nothing* for granted, he analyses by pure reason and force of will, until he reaches Nirvāna which is the extinction of all relativity. No description or even conception of this state is possible. Jñāna is never to be judged by any earthly result. Be not like the vulture which soars almost beyond sight, but

wards at the sight of a bit of carrion. Ask not for healing, or longevity, or prosperity, ask only to be free. We are "Existence, Knowledge, Bliss" (Satchitānanda). Existence is the last generalization in the universe, so, we exist, we know it, and bliss is the natural result of existence without alloy. Now and then we know a moment of supreme bliss, when we ask nothing, give nothing, and know nothing but bliss. Then it passes and we again see the panorama of the universe going on before us and we know it is but a "mosaic work set upon God, who is the background of all things." When we return to earth and see the Absolute as relative, we see Satchitānanda as Trinity—Father, Son, Holy Ghost. Sat=the creating principle; Chit=the guiding principle; Ananda=the realizing principle, which joins us again to the One. No one can know "existence" (Sat) except and through "knowledge" (Chit), hence the force of the saying of Jesus: "No man can see the Father save through the Son." The Vedānta teaches that Nirvāna can be attained here and now, that we do not have to wait for death to reach it. Nirvāna is the realisation of the Self, and after having once, if only for an instant, known this, never again can one be deluded by the mirage of personality. Having eyes, we must see the apparent, but all the time we know it for what it is, we have found out its true nature. It is the "screen" that hides the Self which is unchanging. The screen opens and we find the Self behind it,—all change is in the screen. In the saint the screen is thin and the Reality can almost shine through; but in the sinner it is thick, and we are apt to lose sight of the truth that the Atman is there, as well as behind the saint.

All reasoning ends only in finding *Unity*, so we first use analysis, then synthesis. In the world of Science, the forces are gradually narrowed

down in the search for one underlying force. When physical science can *perfectly* grasp the final unity, it will have reached an end, for reaching unity we find rest. Knowledge is final.

Religion, the most precious of all sciences, long ago discovered that final unity, to reach which is the object of Jñāna Yoga. There is but one Self in the universe, of which all lower selves are but manifestations. The Self, however, is infinitely more than *all* of its manifestations. All is the Self or Brahman. The saint, the sinner, the

lamb, the tiger, even the murderer, as far as they have any reality, can be nothing else, because there is nothing else. "That which exists is One, sages call it variously." Nothing can be higher than this knowledge, and in those purified by Yoga it comes in flashes to the soul. The more one has been purified and prepared by Yoga and meditation, the more clear are these flashes of realization. This was discovered 4,000 years ago, but has not yet become the property of the race,—it is still the property of some individuals only.

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA

By SWAMI SHIVANANDA

Even as a child I had an inherent tendency towards spiritual life and an innate consciousness that enjoyment was not the object of life. As I grew in age and knowledge, these two ideas took a firmer hold of my mind. I went about the city of Calcutta seeking knowledge of God among its various religious societies and temples. But I could not find real satisfaction anywhere: none of them emphasised the beauty of renunciation nor could I discover a single man among them, who was possessed of true spiritual wisdom. Then in 1880 or '81, I heard about Sri Ramakrishna and went to see him in the house of one of his devotees at Calcutta. This was the time when Swami Vivekananda and those other disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, who afterwards renounced the world to carry on his divine mission, had begun to gather round him. On that first day of my visit, I saw Sri Ramakrishna passing into Samādhi; and when he returned to normal consciousness, he spoke in details about Samādhi and its nature. I felt in my inmost heart that here was a man who had indeed realised God and I surrendered myself for ever at his

I have not yet come to a final understanding whether he was a man or superman, a god or God Himself. But I have known him to be a man of complete self-effacement, master of the highest renunciation, possessed of the supreme wisdom and as the very incarnation of Love; and as, with the passing of days, I am getting better and better acquainted with the domain of spirituality and feeling the infinite extent and depth of Sri Ramakrishna's spiritual moods, the conviction is growing in me that to compare him with God, as God is popularly understood, would be minimising and lowering his supreme greatness. I have seen him showering his love equally on men and women, on the learned and the ignorant, and on saints and sinners, and evincing earnest and unceasing solicitude for the relief of their misery and for their attainment to infinite peace by realising the Divine. And I dare say the world has not seen another man of his type in modern times, so devoted to the welfare of mankind.

He was born at Kamarpukur in the Hooghly district in the year 1836. He looked upon name and fame with

precepts deeply impressed on us the extreme insignificance of wordly joys before the ineffable bliss of God. He lived day and night in Divine ecstasy; and Samādhi which is so rare and inaccessible, was perfectly natural to him. It is no wonder, therefore, that the idea of a God-intoxicated man being intimate with the details of everyday life and instructing people thereon, and yearning to remove the sorrows of men and women who approached him with the tales of their worldly afflictions, should appear contrary and unnatural to those who had not witnessed his life. But we have seen innumerable such instances in his life; and there may be a few householders still living, who are feeling themselves blessed by remembering his infinite mercy and his eager attempts at relieving the sufferings of men. One Mani Mallik, having lost his son, came to Sri Ramakrishna with a broken heart. Sri Ramakrishna not only sympathised with him, but entered so deeply into the feelings of the gentleman that it almost seemed as if he were the bereaved father and his sorrow surpassed Mallik's. Some time passed this way. Suddenly Sri Ramakrishna changed his mood and sang a song which encouraged him to prepare for the battle of life. I remember how the father's grief was assuaged by it. The song gave him courage, calmed his sorrow and brought him peace. To him there was neither good nor evil: he saw that the Divine Mother abides in all beings, the difference is only in manifestation. He visualised the Divine Mother in all women and revered and addressed them as his own mother.

By actually practising the doctrines of Hinduism, Christianity and Muhammadanism, etc., he demonstrated the truth of all religions; he found his own realisations tallying with the descriptions of the different scriptures,—the Upanishads, the Bible, the Koran, etc., and he declared that the Truth

is one, being called and worshipped variously by the various religions of the different countries of the world. I have seen many true seekers of God, professing other creeds, come to him to solve their spiritual problems. And it is by seeing him that I came to believe in the truth of such Incarnations and prophets as Buddha, Jesus and Muhammad, and feel their infinite mercy. He never antagonised anyone's spiritual mood or ideal. He helped all who came to him, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, high and low, to advance along the spiritual path according to their individual inclinations.

He was surely wide awake to the minute sufferings of the world. He not only relieved the individual sufferings of those who came to him, but also removed collective suffering on several occasions and advised Swami Vivekananda and his other disciples to do the same. I should mention here that Swami Vivekananda was himself a man of high spiritual attainments;—we heard from the Master himself that the Swami's spiritual capacities were of a very high order. Once the Master accompanied Mathur Babu, a son-in-law of Rani Rasmani (proprietress of the Temple of Dakshineswar where he resided), to his estate in the Nadia District. It was the time when rents were to be realised from the tenants. But there had been failure of crops for two consecutive years and the tenants were reduced to extreme straits. The sight of their starved and ragged figures deeply pained Sri Ramakrishna. He sent for Mathur Babu and requested him to remit their rents and to give them a sumptuous feast and supply them with clothes. Mathur Babu said: "Father, you do not know how much suffering there is in the world. But it will not do because of that to remit people's rents." "You are but Mother's steward," replied Sri Ramakrishna. "These are Mother's tenants; let

Mother's money be spent. They are suffering so much and you will not help them? You must." Mathur Babu used to look upon the Master as the Incarnation of God; he had, therefore, to accede to his request. I shall mention a second incident. It happened at Deoghar in Behar. The Master was going on a pilgrimage with Mathur Babu and party. In those days the Master lived habitually in a semi-superconscious state. When they arrived at Deoghar Sri Ramakrishna found the local inhabitants (Santhals, an aboriginal tribe) reduced to extreme starvation, emaciated and almost naked. On seeing their unusual appearance, he dismounted from the palanquin and asked Mathur Babu who and what they were. The locality had been going through a terrible famine for two years, and the Master had never seen much extreme misery before. When Mathur Babu explained the conditions to him, he said that they must be given oil, bathed, clothed and fed well. When Mathur Babu remonstrated, Sri Ramakrishna said that he would not move from that place, but live with them till their misery was relieved. Mathur Babu had no other way than to do as he was bid. Those two incidents had happened before I met the Master; but I heard about them from his own lips.

Of those that occurred in our presence, I am mentioning here two instances, from which it will be evident that he was not satisfied with merely expressing oral sympathy and love for the afflicted, but also instructed Swami Vivekananda and ourselves to remove their misery. One day at Dakshineswar, Sri Ramakrishna said in a half super-conscious mood: "Jiva is Shiva (man is Divine), who can show mercy to him? No mercy, but service by looking upon man as God." Swami Vivekananda was then present there. On hearing this

pithy utterance of the Master, pregnant with deep meaning, he said to us: "I have listened to-day to a noble word of wisdom. If the opportunity ever comes, I shall proclaim its great truth to the world." If anyone seeks for the root of the innumerable works of service that are being done by the Ramakrishna Mission in different places, he will find it in this incident. The other incident took place in the beginning of 1886. The Master was lying ill at the Cossipore Garden near Calcutta, under medical treatment. It was there, in that very year, that he entered Mahāsamādhi. Swami Vivekananda and some fifteen more of us used then to live in the Garden attending on him. Swami Vivekananda often pressed him during those days to grant him Nirvikalpa Samādhi (highest super-conscious realisation). One day while meditating, Swami Vivekananda actually reached that state. Seeing him become unconscious and his body grown cold like a corpse, we hurried to the Master in great fear and told him what had happened. The Master showed no anxiety: he merely smiled and said: "Very well," and then relapsed into silence. Sometime after the Swami regained outward consciousness and came to the Master. The Master said to him: "Well, now do you understand? This (the highest realisation) will henceforward remain under lock and key. You have the Mother's work to do. When it is finished, She will undo the lock." Swami Vivekananda replied: "Sir, I was happy in Samādhi. In my infinite joy I had forgotten the world. I beseech you to let me remain in that state." "For shame!" cried the Master. "How can you ask such things? I thought you were a vast receptacle, and here you wish to stay absorbed in personal joy like an ordinary man! This realisation will become so natural to you by the grace of the Mother, that even in your normal state you will realise the One

Divinity in all beings. You will do great things in the world. You will bring spiritual knowledge to men, and assuage the misery of the humble and the poor."

Sri Ramakrishna had the divine power to transmit spirituality to others and lift them to higher states of consciousness. This he would do either by thought, power, or touch. Like Swami Vivekananda many of us used to visit him and had the privilege to be lifted to higher planes of consciousness according to our capacities. I myself had the privilege to attain to that high spiritual consciousness (Samādhi) thrice by his touch and wish during his lifetime. I am living still to bear direct testimony to his great spiritual powers. It was neither hypnotism, nor a mere state of deep sleep inasmuch as such realisations brought about changes of character and outlook, which were more or less permanent.

It was naturally not always possible for one like Sri Ramakrishna, ever living on high spiritual elevations, to relieve earthly sufferings of the poor, but it will be wrong therefore to think that he was unmindful of them. What he himself practised and gave out in aphoristic utterances were and are being subsequently realised and practised by Swami Vivekananda and others. It was impossible for him to look after even his own requirements while dwelling on the high spiritual planes. He, therefore, transmitted his spiritual ideas apparently under Divine guidance to those who were fit to quickly assimilate those high spiritual truths and devote themselves to the welfare of mankind. The greatest of them was Swami Vivekananda—so we heard from the Master and felt ourselves.

Therefore, we find as we study the life of the Swami, that as on the one hand he preached the wonderful message of religious harmony, so on the other he preached the universal creed of service by giving secular and spiritual knowledge, food, medicine, etc., to the needy, so that having all their wants fulfilled, they might be by and by led to the domain of spirituality. In fact, Swamiji was the greatest interpreter of the Master's life and a commentary on the Master's aphoristic utterances on deep and noble spiritual principles. I have doubts if any man will ever be able to fully determine the infinitude of Sri Ramakrishna's spiritual realisations.

Some conceive a distinction between the realisation of the Divinity in man and the consciousness of universal suffering with regard to motives for service. It seems to me that these are merely two aspects of the same state of mind and not two different states. It is only by realising the inherent Divinity of man that we can truly feel the depth of his misery—for only then the state of man's spiritual bondage and deprivation of the Divine perfection and bliss becomes vivid to our consciousness. It is the painful consciousness of the contrast between the Divinity within man and his present ignorance of it and consequent suffering, that goads the heart to his service. Without the realisation of the spirit within oneself and in others, true sympathy, love and service are impossible. This is why Sri Ramakrishna wanted his disciples to attain Self-realisation before they could devote themselves profitably to the service of mankind.

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# THROUGH THE DARK TO THE NEW DAWN

BY THE EDITOR

## I

Is religion declining in India? Are our young people losing faith in religion and assuming a secular outlook more and more? If so, what are the reasons? Or is it that they are really as religious as their forefathers,—only the expression of religion with them is different? The other day an Englishman said to us: "Is not India's degradation due to her preoccupation with religion? It is enough if people are honest, active and efficient." We replied: "Don't you think that the world will be a much better place if all were like Christ?" Though this silenced the Englishman, his remarks have occurred to us again and again. We feel that this was not his individual opinion, or even a mere criticism of India. It was the expression of that secularism which is over-running the West and has infected India also to a certain extent. Perchance our people also are feeling the same way. If that be so, it is certainly worth some study.

It is always easy to condemn, but very difficult to understand. In all mental affairs, there is always the danger that we may take the vocal expression to be the thing itself. Even those that represent certain views do not always actually believe in them. We do not mean deliberate misrepresentation. The fact is, certain deep forces are at work in the collective mind. They want to achieve certain ends in the life of humanity. But when their workings reach the conscious layers of our mind, they are understood, interpreted and consequently represented according to our limited visions, and often assume a diametrically opposite appearance to their own real nature. Thus through contradictions and denials oftentimes the deeper purposes of the collective and the individual being are fulfilled. When

therefore we hear loud outcries against religion, they may after all be nothing but the imperfect and passing expression of the desire for a deeper understanding of religion.

In what we have said here, we have not enunciated any new law. In fact the world well knows these erratic workings of mind and reality. That is why we find everywhere the new tendencies—apparently secular—being interpreted as forms of a higher religion. The licence of young people, contempt for moral and spiritual values, preoccupation with material pursuits in the name of national service, application of science to the enhancement of material comforts—all these are being upheld as symptoms of a fuller, nobler life. Yet it needs a very stout optimism indeed to accept such interpretations as correct and true. Here also there is the same danger of misunderstanding. For there is irreligion. The tendency to explain all symptoms as signs of a new religion may also be over-indulged. We may misinterpret things. We must therefore be on our guard against going to the other extreme. The truth evidently lies as usual between the two extremes. We must be very careful in understanding and evaluating the modern phenomena,—they are so complex and deceptive! One way perhaps of evaluating them would be to compare them with the forms and tendencies of religious life, as they existed in the past. For those had been tested through centuries and found to be true of religion, whereas the present tendencies require to be tried before they can be accepted as right and genuine.

## II

What were the conditions in India before? At the very first we should mention the popular tendency of those



days to engage in some kind of spiritual practices. It was considered that unless men daily went through some spiritual exercises, religious ideals would soon lose their value and reality to them, and religious life would become a mockery. Spiritual practices were considered obligatory. The reason is obvious. We are almost all of us enthralled by our senses. The existence of a reality beyond the sensuous experience seems fanciful to us. Yet religion is based on the existence of the supersensible realities. It is absolutely impossible to maintain spiritual enthusiasm in a people unless they were made to at least glimpse, however vaguely, the supra-mundane realities. They must feel in their heart of hearts that there is a reality, finer and more abiding, beautiful and blissful beyond their humdrum existence. The only way to do so was to undergo a daily practice by which the tumults of the sense-life would be at least partially stilled, the higher reality reflected on the tranquillised mind, and consciousness lifted to a higher plane. Various forms of spiritual practice existed. One most common form was the practice of *Sandhyā-vandanam*. Every high-caste boy had to practise it at least thrice a day, sitting calm and quiet in a solitary place. The mind was thus trained to withdraw from the sensible world and fix itself on a supersensible reality. This practice, however imperfectly done, did not fail to produce wonderful results. There was also the practice of *Japa*, the repetition of some sacred formula or a name of God. This also proved equally efficacious. There was again the daily worship of God and the singing of His praise—*Kirtana*,—both with similar effects. Almost all had to go through one or another of these practices. The result was that an entire people had their minds brought to the threshold of the supersensible world. To them the high planes of consciousness and existence were no mere fancies, but impressively real. No argument could rob them of their faith. For it was no

mere belief, but in many cases a thing of actual experience. And experience always tells.

The second thing was *Achāra*, the observance of certain rules of conduct. It was believed that human mind and life were so intractable and complex, that unless determined efforts were made to enclose them within legitimate limits, they would run headlong into ruin. Therefore various rules of conduct were promulgated, and society insisted on its members to abide by them. They were not generally allowed to exercise their individual choice in this matter. For the judgment of an average man was certainly unsafe and unreliable compared to the accumulated wisdom of the collective mind. Besides, such individual freedom was bound to result in virtual anarchy. So all had to abide by the rules. The rules were meant to keep our desires and activities within proper limits, so that they might, instead of leading us deeper into the mire of senselife, lift us to high spiritual levels. These rules were both social and individual. As regards the social rules, they were, except when they were purely sociological in function, meant to render our socio-economic relationships spiritually healthy: collective life was made morally purer and economic greed restrained. The individual rules were of course predominantly spiritual in objective. There were rules as regards bath, food, contact, marital relationship, etc. Though apparently mechanical, these certainly produced salutary effects. Life was chastened, mind properly disciplined, the hunger of the flesh checked and desires eliminated. Above all they produced a strength of mind, which was essential to spiritual progress. It must not also be forgotten that our body itself is a help or hindrance according as we keep it pure or defile it. The *achāras* greatly succeeded in purifying the bodily elements.

The third element was the maintenance of holy traditions. Traditions play an important part in all life,

individual or collective. All cannot think out things for themselves. Besides, in our days of training we need them badly. No training is possible without a predetermined ideal, and who would determine it if not the accumulated wisdom of the nation handed down in the form of traditions? We have to take for granted that certain things are worth achieving in life and that certain other things are to be shunned. This is possible only through living traditions. Therefore, traditions were vigorously maintained and propagated in our society, through books, music, festivals, examples, pilgrimage and various other means. There were innumerable religious festivals throughout the year demonstrating the glory and truth of the spiritual life and realities. There were religious preachers, monastic and lay, who went about, even in the remotest villages, and held discourse on gods and goddesses, on the men of God, on mythologies, and on the religious theories and practices. And there is not another country in the world, where there are so many temples and holy places. Wherever we look, we find these concrete symbols of spiritual life. Every Hindu considered it obligatory to visit not only the temples in his neighbourhood, but also the famous places of pilgrimages. Then there were the holy books in vernaculars and Sanskrit. All these were held in great veneration and read with great devotion. Especially the *Purāṇas*,—the *Rāmāyana*, the *Mahābhārata*, the *Bhāgavata*, etc.—were studied in every village. And there were always religious songs on the lips of the people, and dramatic performances in which the holy traditions were represented. These were not with the people of those times, mere things of enjoyment; they also attached a great religious value to them.

The fourth element was the existence of sufficient leisure. It was found that a man who was ever engaged in earning his bread, who was always thinking of money, could not devote much attention to religious things. He was bound to

become excessively material. It was necessary, therefore, that every man should have his living ensured on legitimate labour and a legitimate margin of leisure left to him. So economic competition was eliminated through the caste system. That gave people time to think of higher things.

The above general estimate is, we think, enough to contrast the past with the present conditions of religion in India. What are the present conditions? If we seek for the four factors considered above in the present-day India, we shall find that they have become rather scarce. Things are not at all the same as before. Economic conditions have totally changed. Now people are not assured of their living. The old structure has broken down and unemployment is rampant everywhere. In every field, there is keen competition. People are crying for bread. Day and night they are thinking of how to feed the mouths of the family. Little time is thus left for devotion to higher ends. People do not go as eagerly and devotedly on pilgrimage as before. Pilgrimage seems to have lost its original charm. There is no money to be spent on distant journeys, nor enough leisure. Temples are neglected. Many of them are crumbling down for want of repair, and very few temples are being built anew. The festivals have become few and far between; and even the few that are still celebrated are, without their accustomed pomp and glory. People no longer care to read their Scriptures, and the sacred discourses have become rare. Sanskrit learning has almost vanished from the villages. Formerly the learned Brahmins of the villages were looked upon as guides not only in Scriptural knowledge but also in the practice of religion. But now few Brahmins are devoted to the study of the Scriptures,—they have received English education and neglected Sanskrit, because only through modern education can they hope to earn a decent income and ensure good position in society. Monks and laymen do not wander about as much

among the villages as they used to do before. And even when they do so, they do not receive the same attention as before. People are too busy with mundane affairs to listen to talks about God.

It will be seen that these changes are mainly due to changes in the economic conditions of India. If our former socio-economic system persisted, these unfortunate changes in our mental conditions would not possibly have occurred. But there have been other deeper changes. Our traditions have broken down. We do not trust and reverence them as much as we used to do before. We have lost faith in them. We are critical about them. Our holy books do not appeal to us in the same sense as before. It is nonsense to say that we have become more rational. We are not. Let us study our daily life and activity a little calmly, and we shall find that we are scarcely rational in most things. In fact, we are more unreasonable than ever before. Human mind has a tendency to delude itself by covering its inclinations with the cloak of reason. Somehow we have become indifferent about the things recorded and enjoined in our Scriptures. No doubt there are many unscientific things in our books. But our forefathers did not seek for scientific knowledge in them, but for a higher inspiration. Often our parents and dear ones are not as learned as we would wish them to be. Are they therefore less dear and respectable to us? We do not regard them intellectually but with love and affection, and therefore they appear adorable to us. Similarly of the national traditions. Defects there may be, but we also find higher elements in them when we love and reverence them. But the moment we cease to do so, we become critical and discover innumerable faults in them.

The reason of this critical attitude is perhaps the prevalence of a type of education, which is not only foreign but peculiarly destructive. It has not only undermined our faith but has failed to

substitute anything positive in return. The ideals for which the Indian nation has striven for ages, and the ideas which have been its very foundation, have come to be looked upon with suspicion. From all these the inevitable consequence has followed—the destruction of social cohesion. Hindu society is in disintegration. At least so it seems. The rules of conduct that were considered obligatory before, are scarcely observed now. Life lacks discipline. And last of all, there is no regular spiritual practice. The loss that this implies is incalculable. We have seen how this was the actual basis of spiritual faith and zeal. Lacking this, the spiritual realities seem to us as chimerical: we do not believe they are all true. Had we maintained our practices unimpaired, even the English education and economic changes could not have shaken us from our position as they have done. For in spite of everything our faith in and experience of the supersensible realities would have remained undimmed, and we would certainly not have become a bundle of negatives which we are now. But these practices we have neglected and the result has been seemingly disastrous.

Are we extreme in our estimate of the present conditions of things? We are not unaware that there are yet many devout souls in every part of India to whom religion is as true and real as it was to our forefathers, and that in spite of foreign education, the spiritual fire burns as bright in many bosoms as ever before. Still, we believe that judged from the standpoint of our past outlook, the present are indeed as gloomy as we have depicted them.

### III

Mind that we say: "judged from the standpoint of our past outlook." We do not say that the prospect is absolutely gloomy. What we mean is that the present conditions are not without their redeeming features. If we take them at their face value, it is inevitable that we shall condemn them, for they would

hold out no hope for us. But we for ourselves are not prepared to be satisfied with a superficial estimation. As we have mentioned in the opening paragraphs of this essay, things are not always what they seem. Often fundamental forces achieve their purpose through self-contradiction. Anyhow it behoves us to probe deeper before we pronounce our final condemnation of the present conditions.

We said that the breakdown of our traditions is due mainly to a negative foreign education. But perhaps it would not be wholly true to fix the entire responsibility upon it. We have also to take an important fact into account, namely, that the conditions of Hindu society even in the pre-English age were after all abnormal. Let us explain.

We must remember that religion for most people is a thing of custom,—it is not sufficiently real and vivid with them. It goes without saying that the predominant tendency of most persons is towards sense-enjoyment. They do not really want God. Yet these persons have to be brought to Him. The natural course would be to satisfy their carnal desires before they are initiated into religion. This infinite universe with all its beauty and joy is tempting us every moment. It seems so vast and sublime! We want to enjoy it to the full—its riches, powers, beauties and joys. We want to conquer and possess it. There is an inherent desire in the human heart to master the universe; and it is but natural. We have a natural hatred of separation and limitation. Yet as we now are, we find this infinite universe beyond our hold and pressing us from all sides. We want to unite ourselves with it, we want to mingle our being with its being. But in our delusion we do not know the right process of doing it. We want to do it through the senses, that is, by externally conquering and possessing it. No doubt this is a normal desire. But this preoccupation with the visible universe blinds us to the existence of a

much superior reality, the Spirit. We get enmeshed by matter and toil in it from life to life. *In order to be truly religious, one must feel in one's inmost soul the infinite superiority of the Spirit to the universe.* The world must appear as insignificant, trivial, insipid. Without this feeling and consciousness, our idea of God would be poor indeed, and our faith in and devotion to Him, more or less formal. Religion, in fact, will not be real.

Of course, it is not possible for any sense-bound man to ever possess the universe. But his desire to do so must be assuaged. All wise religious systems have, therefore, provided for the average man's self-satisfaction before he embraces spiritual life seriously. Let him have his fill of the earth-life. Let him experience its hollowness. Only then will he yearn for That which is above and beyond the world. When the Hindus' life was normal, both individually and collectively, they had enough of earth's pleasures and powers. They revelled in them and thus transcended them. Unfortunately, however, this sane combination of *Dharma* and *Moksha* was impaired by the Buddhistic over-emphasis on *Moksha*, and the true balance of life was lost. The harmony was destroyed. And as a result, the nation became debilitated, till at last when the Muhammadans came, it easily succumbed to their attack.

And this was a great tragedy. For when the Muhammadans established their dominions in India, the only thing the Hindus could do was to retire behind the walls of protective customs and thus save themselves from being absorbed by Islam. It is true that Hindus still possessed many parts of the country and there were many powerful Hindu princes and landlords. But there is no doubt that the earthly glory and power of the Hindus were much circumscribed by the Muhammadans. This was not at all wholesome for the Hindus. Because, the very feeling of being under the power of another had

a great cramping effect on the Hindus' soul. It is always so. This is the worst of political subjection. Even when you have great privileges, you do not feel yourself normal. During the Muhammadan rule, Hindus enjoyed many privileges no doubt. There were great Hindu generals, ministers and provincial rulers. But in spite of all that, the consciousness of limitation was never lost. In fact, it slowly worked on the Hindu mind. Life became more and more abnormal. The normal activities of normal humans were not in evidence. We became preternaturally subjective in our outlook. We became unnaturally mild and other-worldly. There is no doubt that about the time the English established their rule in India, we were a broken nation, out of which all energies had been sapped, so that when the onslaughts of Western ideas began, we could not stand them, we easily succumbed. We were confused. We lost the sense of values. And why? Because then, generally speaking, the people were not truly religious. That is to say, though *consciously* they sincerely aspired after spiritual realities and were quite faithful to the spiritual ideals, and though there were undoubtedly some to whom religion was quite real, yet the sense of the surfeit of earthly glory which is the necessary basis of all abiding religious consciousness, was not with the generality of people. Their feeling for religion lacked the sense of majesty; there were in their mind lurking desires for earthly power and enjoyment. That is the reason why when the West unfolded before us the vision of the world's power and joy, we easily yielded, forsaking our own ideals and traditions. It was not merely the Western education, but our pre-existing inner weakness, that was responsible for that tragic confusion.

If our diagnosis is correct, we can at once discover new significance in the present apparently secular movements of our people. Perchance we are trying to become normal before we become

supernormal. Perhaps we are trying to taste of the earth in order to find it finally insipid. We want to enjoy earthly power in order to find it trivial and hollow. We do not refer to the present licences of a section of our people. They are wallowing in the mire of sensuality like pigs. Through this nothing is ever achieved. But there is a dignity and a majesty even in the man of the world when he takes himself seriously, when the powers that come to him, albeit they are earthly, raise his mind to a higher level (and do not drag him to the level of brutes)—the level to which the gods belong. Above and beyond that is indeed the place of the saints, the men of God. Now this celestial glory is the objective towards which the desires of our people are reaching, so that their normal faculties and powers may fully and healthily function and that they may overcome the sense of limitation, which is ever dogging the average human being everywhere, and specially in India.

And not merely that. The secular tendencies of our people are not merely a reaction to their previous limitation. We have said before that one must have satisfactory relations with the world before one can truly transcend its influence. That means that these relations are relative. At a time when distant travelling was unknown, one's mental horizon was limited within his province or country. That was the area over which his mind roamed. But now that the whole world has come together, to remain shut up within one's province or country is nothing but insularity. At a time when most powers of nature were beyond human control, people never felt small if they could not employ them to their service. Now that men have enslaved many of those powers, to continue primitively seems indeed a deprivation and humiliation. At a time when our only resort for knowledge was our own culture and learning, it was enough if one mastered the indigenous culture. But now that all the different cultures of the world

are within our reach, to acquire only our own seems only half learning. Now the horizon of the average man has widened a great deal. Necessarily, any satisfaction as regards our relations with the present world, is possible only through a corresponding widening of the scopes of our knowledge and activity. This is another reason why the secular outlook predominates in India at present. Our people feel that they are much behind other nations in these terrestrial affairs and that they must overtake them somehow. This urge is in the soul of the Indian nation, and it cannot be satisfied until and unless we feel that we have manifested enough power worthy of the best of modern men.

#### IV

Now the question of questions is: Should we call this urge religious or irreligious? Is it religion to try to achieve materially? Is the feeling of our young people that we have enough of religion—what is wanted is that we should be active and efficient—in any sense religious? It does not matter what they *profess*. They may decry religion. For most of them are but unconscious instruments in the hands of the powers that are working in the depths of the national soul, fulfilling certain of their purposes through the fanatical zeal of individuals. But the powers—what are they? Are they contributing to the growth of religion? Yes, and No,—both answers perhaps are possible to this question. No, we say, because striving for material glory can in no sense be called spiritual. Yes, we say, because if they help men to satisfy their worldly ambitions and thus demonstrate the hollowness and triviality of the world, they substantially help them in realising true religion. But, of course, this answer would be justified, if only there is a propellent idealism in and behind our secular activities, which would push us beyond the earthly limits and lift us to supermundane levels. Unless there is this

conscious idealism, that is to say, unless there is quite a good number among those engaged in the work of material and secular upliftment of the nation, who are conscious that such achievements are but a means to a high end which is supersensible and spiritual, secular activities can in no sense be called spiritual, for then they would be in no way different from the activities of the worldly-minded. This idealism is the transforming element. We want political freedom. We want industrial greatness. We want social wellbeing. We want scientific knowledge and conquest of external nature. We want wealth, health, all-round prosperity. All these are helpful only if the advanced among of us, those that lead, are keenly conscious that the quest for earthly prosperity is justified, only that the requisite self-satisfaction may be obtained in order to rise to the higher levels of spiritual life. Without this consciousness, secular aspirations are dangerous. With this, they are but the necessary stepping-stones for reaching the perfect spiritual manhood.

And also perchance, we the people of the present age are dreaming of an ideal manhood, which would be denied nothing, which would not feel cramped in any part of its being, and which would be filled with a plentitude of power ennobled by its renunciation and therefore consecration at the feet of God. This is a dream which when realised would reveal a religion which is much more glorious than any of its previous versions. That is perhaps why humanity is disinclined to deny any vision of the Being, any part of his self. But all this hankering for the realisation of the Perfect Being will avail little, nay, prove fruitless and disastrous, unless the highest self of man—the Divine—be made the objective of all efforts. Have they done so in India? Not all, we are afraid. But there are many, many among us to-day, who have done so, who dream the glorious dream and are struggling to realise it in the life of the Indian nation. These are

indeed the hope of India and the world. There is no doubt that the old modes of religious expression will not all be repeated in the present age. If we think that spiritual feeling will express itself always in the older forms, we are sadly mistaken. Temples are being replaced by the busy workshops—in the very midst of their daily activities men are seeking to realise the Divine. The so-called secular service they are going to realise as the worship of the Lord Himself. Pilgrimage is being replaced by the quest of the service of men. Old *āchāras* are being substituted by self-imposed disciplines in the service of the nation and humanity and by struggles to achieve nobly. And do we not see how the story of Man has already taken the place of the stories of gods and goddesses in the interest of people?—History is replacing the *Purānas*. We do not mean that the old forms will totally vanish. Some of them will live, but other forms and institutions are attaining equal prominence and sanctity. If we fail to see this, we shall greatly mistake the present age. It is true the new institutions have not yet taken proper form, but there is no doubt they will soon do so.

### V

But at this juncture we must sound a note of warning. There is a danger that our spiritual idealism may be cankered by false notions. There is no doubt that the modern age is predominantly secular in outlook. If we still look on it with hope, it is because we think that it has not yet matured,—it is only in its opening stages. It has a vast promise; it is rich with potentiality, though as yet its realisations are of a crude nature. But the dream of an unprecedented perfection is there. And because we are eager to realise it, therefore we are always in danger of mistaking the stages on the way as the goal itself: lower ideals we may mistake for the Ideal itself. This danger has to be provided against. We want national upliftment and we take that to be the

highest aim of life! We are enamoured of art,—well, we propagate art itself as religion! Pursuit of knowledge is all right, but our partial vision makes us consider that a kind of religion! These mistakes are being made every day. If the present age has gained considerably in breadth of vision, obviously it has lost proportionately in depth. But what use is a shallow liberalism? Breadth and depth must be combined:—as wide as the sky, but also as deep as the sea we must be. That must be our goal. *Let us remind ourselves once for all that unless our idealism be truly spiritual, it will spell the ruin of India, it will only mislead us and slowly drown us in materialism. Unless we be on our guard, the vast promise of the present age may after all come to nothing; on the other hand, our struggles for the all-round prosperity of the nation may draw us down to the dark abyss of death.* It is absolutely necessary, therefore, that we form a correct idea of the nature of the spiritual life and vision, or we shall always mistake the means to be the end and sidetrack the onward march of humanity. There are sure signs by which we can find out if our activity and objective is spiritual or not. Do we feel we are beyond body and mind when we engage in our work or dwell on our end? Do we feel the oneness of the entire reality? Do we feel we have gone beyond the reach of death (such a feeling is possible even while in a body)? If we do, we may be sure that we are going along the right path. To one who dwells and acts on the spiritual plane, the Divine Consciousness is ever present.

It has been said that “the creative spirit of God gets His best work done through men when at the practical moment they forget themselves, and even Him, in the work and the object. Before or after a long flight of speculation, Kepler or Newton—a Linnæus or Pasteur—formally remember their God, and then, being finite workmen, promptly forget Him so as to do His work and benefit the race.” This, as many

of our readers will feel, states only the standpoint of a *Karma Yogin* in the first stages of his development. To make the means the end is no doubt a sign of *Karma Yoga*. We become absorbed in our work and in the realisation of our end and forget everything else. But such absorption, when it is deep, complete and true, takes us to the living presence of God even in the midst of our work. We do feel as clearly as in the hours of our formal devotions the presence of Divinity in and outside us, and everything appears enveloped and interpenetrated by the spirit of God. There need not be any kind of forgetfulness of Him. This indeed is the character and experience of the true *Karma Yogin*. But what we should further note here is that when such an experience comes, the nature and estimation of our work also change. If we have begun with, say, social service, it will not remain what we usually know it to be, when the pre-

sence of God has sanctified it. It will become transformed. This inner and outer transformation is the sign. Let everyone engage in the work he has chosen. But let him never think that it is spiritual even in its present form and import. It will become spiritual only when the inner and consequently the outer transformation has taken place. Once we realise this, our outlook at once changes,—we try not only to do our chosen work, but also to raise our consciousness to the spiritual level by distinct spiritual exercises, for we feel that until that level is reached, our work and understanding of it will scarcely be perfect. No man indeed, whatever the nature of his vocation, can ever deny homage to religion even as it has been known from time immemorial and as it will be known for all times to come,—the conscious consecration of life and all to God and their eternal absorption in Him. May India never lose sight of this ultimate eternal vision!

## THE DIARY OF A DISCIPLE

6TH MAY, 1922.

It was evening. Swami Shivananda was sitting in the upper veranda of the main building of the Belur Monastery. The disciple asked him:

"I want to ask you a question: Can a Westerner enter the shrine of the Master?"

*Swami*: "Why not? But of course he must take off his shoes before he enters."

*Disciple*: "Suppose a Muhammadan also wants to go into the shrine?"

*Swami*: "Yes, he also can go. Only the other day Moulana Mohammed Ali and Moulana Shaikat Ali came here. They went into the shrine."

*Disciple*: "Yes, Maharaj, I also think that unless people of all creeds are allowed to visit the shrine of the Master, how can we maintain the all-comprehensive ideal of the Master, and how can people regard him as the teacher of all religions? Of course, one

must be clean if one wants to go into his shrine.

"An Englishman one day visited the Dacca Centre of our Mission. When he was told of the Master's teachings on the harmony of religions, he asked: 'Can I enter into your shrine?' 'Certainly you can,' I replied, 'but you must wear pure clothes and take off your shoes.'"

21ST MAY, 1922.

It was Sunday, about 8-30 at night. At the Belur Math, Swami Shivananda was sitting in the outer veranda of the main building, overlooking the sacred stream of the Ganges. Some monks of the Monastery were sitting and standing near him. One of them asked the Swami in course of conversation:

"Is it true that the amulet of the Master, which is worshipped here, was given to him by your father?"

The Swami replied: "While the Master was suffering from an excruciat-



ing burning sensation all over his body, my father asked him to wear an *ista-kavacha* (amulet containing an inscription of the sacred formula pertaining to his Chosen Deity) on his person. It is that same *ista-kavacha*."

*A Devotee*: "Were you at that time at Dakshineswar?"

*Swami*: "I was not even born then. It happened during his *Sādhanā*. My father used in those days to visit Dakshineswar now and then. He used to practise as a Mukhteer at Barasat. In fact he was connected with many landlords including Rani Rasmani as a legal practitioner, and used to earn a great deal of money. He was a great *Tāntrika Sādhaka*. I remember how he used to invite home many *Tāntrika Sādhakas* from Kamakhya, paying all their expenses, and worship the Divine Mother and practise *japa*. I remember one *Sādhaka* who used to sit at *japa* with a bottle of wine. He would drink a little from time to time and continue with *japa* throughout the night.

"I, however, did not know that my father visited Dakshineswar. I learnt it afterwards from the Master. The Master would not generally ask anyone about his home affairs. He used to see his disciples with the spiritual eye and always behaved with them accordingly. One day he asked me: 'I don't know why, but I am feeling a desire to ask you about your home. Where is your home?' I mentioned my village. 'Who is your father?' 'Kanai Ghosal,' I replied. On hearing this he exclaimed: 'Oh! he was a great *Sādhaka*. He used to practise *japa* in the Kali temple here, clad in a red silk cloth. He used to bring a man with him, who would sit behind him singing Mother's songs, and tears would trickle down your father's face. And as he would come out of the temple, with his eyes all red, he would seem to me like a veritable *Bhairava*. At that time I had a terrible burning sensation all over my body. It was so intense that all the hair on my body was burnt. I

said to your father: 'You know many things. Can you tell me how I can get rid of this burning sensation?' He advised me to put on the *ista-kavacha*, and that indeed relieved me.' "

*A Monk*: "Who made the *kavacha* for the Master?"

*Swami*: "That I do not know. This is all that the Master told me."

*A Monk*: "Where did you first see the Master? At Dakshineswar?"

*Swami*: "No, at the house of Ram Babu.\* A relation of Ram Babu used to work in the same office with me. He would visit the Master and often tell us his story at the office. I used to practise *Sādhanā* even from a boy. I was attached to Brahmoism in those days, and I read about the Master in Keshab Babu's paper, *Dharma-tattva*. I did not, however, know the exact location of Dakshineswar or the way to it. I was afterwards told by Ram Babu's relation that it was opposite to the mouth of the Bally Khāl.

"One Saturday that gentleman informed me that the Master would visit Ram Babu's house that day, and that I could see him if I went there. I said: 'The place is very near to where I stay. I shall surely go.'

"For a long time I had been eager to know the nature of *Samādhi*. I used to meditate and sometimes realise a condition which I thought was approximate to *Samādhi*. But I wanted very much to know what it exactly was. I questioned many people, but none could explain it to me. Only one man said: 'None can realise *Samādhi* in this *Kali Yuga*. I have seen only one man who has it,—he is Ramakrishna Paramahansa of Dakshineswar.'

"Anyhow, I went that evening to Ram Babu's house. I found the Master sitting in a room crowded with people. The Master was scarcely conscious. I saluted and sat near him. What was my surprise when I heard

\*Ram Chandra Datta, a prominent householder disciple of the Master.

him talking eloquently on a subject which I had been so eager to know about—on *Samādhi*!”

*A Monk*: “What did he say about *Samādhi* that day?”

*Swami*: “I do not remember details. But I remember that he dwelt on *Nirvikalpa Samādhi* and said that very few could realise it in the *Kali Yuga*,

and if one realised it, one's body did not live more than twenty-one days, and that Shyam Mukherji of Salkhia realised *Nirvikalpa Samādhi* and his body lived only twenty-one days.

“I did not have any talk with the Master on that occasion. A month after, I went to Dakshineswar and became known to him.”

## THE RIVER RE-ENTERS THE SEA<sup>1</sup>

BY ROMAIN ROLLAND

He was nearing the Ocean. The end was approaching. His feeble body was almost daily consumed in the fire of ecstasy and was worn out by his constant gift of himself to the famished crowds. Sometimes like a sulky child he complained to the Mother of the flood of visitors devouring him day and night. In his humorous way he said to Her:

“Why do You bring hither all these people, who are like milk diluted with five times its own quantity of water? My eyes are destroyed with blowing the fire to dry up the water! My health is gone. It is beyond my strength. Do it Yourself, if You want it done! This (*pointing to his body*) is nothing but a burst drum, and if You go on beating it day in and day out, how long do You think it will last?”

But he never turned anyone away. He said:

“Let me be condemned to be born over and over again, even in the form of a dog, if so I can be of help to a single soul!”

And again:

“I will give up twenty thousand such bodies to help one man. It is glorious to help even one man!”

He reproached himself for his ecstasies, because they took time that might otherwise have been given to others:

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“O Mother, stop me from enjoying them! Let me stay in my normal state, so that I can be of more use in the world.”

During his last days when his disciples protected him in spite of himself against the importunity of devotees, he said:

“How I suffer because no one has need of my help to-day!”

His great friend, the illustrious chief of the Brahmo Samaj, Keshab Chunder Sen, preceded him in death. He died in 1884. With tears in his eyes Ramakrishna said of him shortly before his death that “the rose tree is to be transplanted because the gardener wants beautiful roses of him.”

Afterwards he said:

“Half of me has perished.”

But the other half, if it is possible to use such an expression, was the humble people. He was as easy of access to them, if not more so, as to the most learned; and among the familiar friends of his last years he counted, in the same category as the disciples so dear to his heart, simple people, madmen of God. Such an one was old Gopāler Mā, whose simple story is worthy of a place in the Franciscan legends:

An old woman of sixty, who had been widowed while still a little girl, had dedicated herself to the Lord. The hunger of her unassuaged maternal love had made her for thirty years adopt the child Krishna, Gopāla, as her own, until it had become a harmless mania.

No sooner had she met Ramakrishna than his God-filled glance made little Gopāla issue from her. The warm compassion of the Master, which made the hidden desires and sorrows of those who came near him his own, lent inspiration to the unsatisfied dream of the childless mother, and he put the God-Child into her arms. From that moment the little Gopāla never left the mother, who had adopted Him. Henceforward she did not pray; she had no need to pray, for she lived in unbroken communion with her God. She threw her rosary into the river and passed her days prattling with the Child. This state lasted two months and then was mitigated; the Child only appeared in moments of meditation. But the old woman's heart was filled with happiness, and Ramakrishna tenderly regarded her joy. But his ever present sense of fun made him ask the old woman to tell her story to the haughty Naren, proud of his critical reason and holding that such visions were stupid and morbid illusions. The old woman quite simply interrupted her maternal chatter, and made Naren her judge:

"Sir," she said to him, "I am only a poor ignorant woman. I do not rightly understand things. You are learned. Tell me, do you think it is true?"

Naren, deeply moved, answered:

"Yes, mother, it is quite true."

It was in 1884 that Ramakrishna's health took a serious turn. While he was in a trance he dislocated his left arm, and it was very painful. A great change took place in him. He divided his infirm body and his wandering soul into two. He no longer spoke of "I." He was no longer "me." He called himself "This." The sick man more intensely than before perceived "Līlā. . . the Play. . . . The God who disports Himself in men. . . ." The man roughly seized his real self, and then fell into silent amazement; his joy knew no bounds, as if he had suddenly and unexpectedly met one of his dear ones. . . . "When Shiva saw his real

self he cried: 'Such am I! Such am I!' and danced for joy. . . ."

In April the following year his throat became inflamed. Overstrain from constant talking and the dangerous Samādhis, which made blood flow in his throat, certainly had something to do with it. The doctors he consulted forbade both speech and ecstasy, but he paid no attention to them. At a great Vaishnava religious festival he spent himself without measure, and in return the disease grew worse. It became practically impossible for him to eat. Nevertheless he continued to receive those who came to him day and night. Then one night he had hemorrhage of the throat. The doctors diagnosed cancer. His chief disciples persuaded him to put himself for a time under the care of Dr. Mahendra Lāl Sarkār of Calcutta. In September, 1885, a small house was rented where Ramakrishna's wife installed herself in a corner, so that she might supervise his régime. The most faithful disciples watched during the night. The majority of them were poor, and they mortgaged, borrowed or pawned their effects in order to pay the expenses of the Master's illness—an effort, which cemented their union. Dr. Sarkar was a rationalist, who did not share the religious views of Ramakrishna, and told him so frankly. But the more he came to know his patient the deeper did his respect for him become, until he treated him for nothing. He came to see him three times a day and spent hours with him (which, it may be observed in passing, was perhaps not the best way to make him better). He said to him:

"I love you so dearly because of your devotion to truth. You never deviate by a hair's breadth from what you believe to be true. . . . Do not think that I am flattering you. If my father was in the wrong I should tell him so."

But he openly censured the religious adoration rendered him by the disciples:

"To say that the Infinite came down to earth in the form of a man is the ruin of all religions."

Ramakrishna maintained an amused silence, but the disciples became animated in these discussions, which only served to increase their mutual esteem; and their faith in the Master, who was illumined by his sufferings, was strengthened. They tried to understand why such a trial was imposed upon him, and split up into groups holding different views. The most exalted, headed by Girish the redeemed sinner, declared that the Master himself had willed his illness, so as to establish the communion of apostles round him. The rationalists with Naren as their mouthpiece admitted that the Master's body was subject to the laws of nature like other men's. But they all recognised the Divine presence in the dying man; and on the day of the great annual festival of Kâli, of which Ramakrishna to their surprise made no mention, but spent absorbed in ecstasy, they realised that the Mother was indwelling within him. The exaltation excited by this belief had its dangers, the chief among them being an access of convulsive sentimentalism. They had—or pretended to have—visions and ecstasies with laughter, song and tears. Naren then showed for the first time the vigour of his reason and his will. He treated them with contempt. He told them that "the Master's ecstasies had been bought by a life of heroic austerity and desperate conflict for the sake of knowledge; their effusions were nothing but the vapourings of sick imagination when they were not lies. Those who were ill ought to take more care of themselves! Let them eat more and so react against spasms which were worthy only of ridiculous females! And let them beware! Of those who encouraged a religion of ostentatious emotion eighty per cent became scoundrels and fifteen per cent lunatics." His words acted like a cold douche. They were ashamed

that their ecstasies were shams. Naren's action did not stop there. He gathered these young people together and imposed a virile discipline upon them. In their need for action he counselled them to devote themselves to some definite object. The young lion's cub began to assert himself in those days as the future sovereign of the Order, although he was himself not yet free from his own difficulties and struggles. For him these days marked the crisis of despair, when he had to make the final choice between the conflicting forces of his nature—harrowing days, fruitful days, preparing the soul for the harvest.

Ramakrishna grew worse. Dr. Sarkar advised his removal from Calcutta to the country. Towards the middle of December, 1885 he was taken to a house in the suburbs in the midst of the beautiful gardens of Cossipore, and there he spent the last eight months of his mortal life. Twelve of his young chosen disciples never left him until the end. Naren directed their activities and their prayers. They begged the Master to join with them in praying for his recovery; and the visit of a pandit, who shared their faith, gave them an opportunity to renew their entreaties.

"The Scriptures," the pandit said to Ramakrishna, "declare that saints like you can cure yourselves by an effort of will."

Ramakrishna replied:

"My mind has been given to God once and for all. Would you have me ask it back?"

His disciples reproached him for not wishing to be restored to health.

"Do you think my sufferings are voluntary? I wish to recover, but it depends on the Mother."

"Then pray to Her."

"It is easy for you to say that, but I cannot say the words."

Naren begged:

"For our sakes!"

"Very well," said the Master sweetly.

They left him alone for several hours. When they returned the Master said :

"I said to Her: 'Mother, I can eat nothing because of my suffering. Make me able to eat a little!' She pointed you all out to me and said: 'What! Thou canst eat through all these mouths!' I was ashamed and could not utter another word."

Several days later he said :

"My teaching task is almost finished. I cannot instruct people any longer ; for I see that the whole world is filled with the Lord. So I ask myself: 'Whom shall I teach?'"

On January 1, 1886 he felt better, and walked a few steps in the garden. There he blessed his disciples. The effects of his blessing manifested themselves in different ways—in silent ecstasy or in loquacious transports of joy. But all were agreed that they had received as it were an electric shock, an access of power so that each one realised his chosen ideal at a bound. (The distinguishing characteristic of Ramakrishna as a religious chief was always that he did not communicate a precise faith, but the energy necessary for faith ; he played the part, if I may say so, of a mighty spiritual dynamo). In their abounding joy the disciples in the garden, whom the Master had blessed, called to those in the house to come and share the bliss of his benediction. In this connection an incident took place that might have come from the Christian Gospel: The humble Latu and Sarat the Brahman were taking advantage of the Master's absence to clean his room and make his bed. They heard the calls, and saw the whole scene from above ; but they continued their task of love, thus renouncing their share of joy.

Naren alone remained unsatisfied. His father's loss, worldly cares, and the fever in his heart consumed him. He saw the fulfilment of all the others and felt himself abandoned. There had been no response to his anguish, no comforting ray to warm him. He begged Ramakrishna to allow him to

relieve his misery by several days of Samādhi ; but the Master rebuked him severely (he kept his indulgence for those from whom he expected least) and reproached him for such "base thoughts." He must make some arrangement for his family and then his troubles would be at an end and he would receive everything. Naren wept like a lost sheep, and fled through Calcutta and the fields, covered with dust and the straw of a stack into which he had run ; he groaned, he was consumed with desire for the inaccessible, and his soul knew no rest. Ramakrishna, tenderly and pityingly, watched his wild course from afar ; he knew quite well that before the divine prey could be brought down panting, it was necessary to pick up the scent. He felt that Naren's condition was remarkable, for in spite of boasting his unbelief, he was home-sick for the Infinite. He knew him to be blessed among men in proportion as he was proven. He softly caressed Naren's face in front of the other disciples. He recognised in him all the signs of Bhakta—knowledge through love. The Bhaktas unlike the Jñānins (believers through knowledge of the spirit) do not seek for liberation. They must be born and reborn for the good of humanity ; for they are made to love and to serve mankind. So long as an atom of desire remains they will be reincarnated. When all desires are torn from the heart of mankind then at last they will attain Mukti (liberation). But the Bhaktas never aspire to it themselves. And that is why the loving Master, whose heart was the home of all living beings, and who could never forget them, always had a preference for the Bhaktas, of whom the greatest was Naren.

He did not hide the fact that he regarded him as his heir. He said to him one day :

"I leave these young people in your charge. Busy yourself with developing their spirituality."

And in preparation for a monastic life, he ordered them to beg their food from all houses without distinction of caste. Towards the end of March he gave them the saffron robe, the sign of the Sannyâsin, and some semblance of monastic initiation.

The proud Naren set the example of renunciation. But it was with great difficulty that he abdicated his spiritual pride. The devil would have offered him in vain (as to Jesus) the goods of this world, but he would soon have found a chink in his armour if he had proposed sovereignty of soul to him. One day in order to test his spiritual powers Naren told his companion, Kaliprasad, to touch him while he was in a state of meditation. Kali did so and immediately fell into the same state. Ramakrishna heard of it and rebuked Naren severely; he blamed him for casting his seed into the grass for a frivolous object, and categorically condemned the transmission of ideas from one to the other. To attempt anything against complete freedom of spirit was anathema. You should help others, but you must not substitute your thought for theirs.

A little time afterwards Naren, while meditating, had the sensation of a light shining behind his head. Suddenly he lost consciousness and was absorbed in the Absolute. He had fallen into the depths of the terrible Nirvikalpa Samâdhi, which he had sought for so long, and which Ramakrishna had refused him. When, after a long time he returned to himself, it seemed to him that he had no longer a body, but that he was nothing but a face, and he cried out: "Where is my body?" The other disciples were terrified, and ran to the Master, but Ramakrishna said calmly:

"Very well, let him stay like that for a time! He has worried me long enough."

When Naren again came down to earth, he was bathed in ineffable peace. He approached the Master. Ramakrishna said to him:

"Now the Mother has shown you everything. But this revelation will remain under lock and key, and I shall keep the key. When you have accomplished the Mother's work you will find this treasure again."

And he advised him what to do for his health during the succeeding days.

The nearer he approached his end, the more detached he became. He spread his serene heaven over the disciples' sorrow. The *Gospel*, written practically at the bedside of the dying man, records the harmonious murmurs of his soul, like a stream in the night, in the heavy silence of the apostles, while in the moonlight the branches of the trees in the garden rustled gently, shaken by the warm breeze of the south. To his friends, his loved ones, who were inconsolable at the thought of his loss, he said half in a whisper:

"Râdhâ said to Krishna: 'O Beloved, dwell in my heart, and do not come again in your human form!' But soon she languished for the sight of the human form of her Beloved. But the will of the Lord had to be accomplished and Krishna did not appear in human form for a long time. . . . The Lord came and was incarnate in man. Then he returned with his disciples to the Divine Mother."

Rakhal then exclaimed: "Do not go away before we do!"

Ramakrishna smiled tenderly and said:

"A troop of Bâuls suddenly entered a house; they sang God's name and danced for joy. Then they left the house as suddenly as they had entered it—and the owners did not know who they were. . . ."

He sighed.

"Sometimes I pray that the Lord will grant that I should be no more sent into this world."

But he went on at once:

"He (God) reclothes Himself with the human form for love of those pure souls who love the Lord."

And he looked at Naren with ineffable affection.

On the 9th of April Ramakrishna said, looking at the fan which he was waving to and fro in the hot night :

"Just as I see this fan I am holding in front of me, I have seen God. . . . And I see. . . ."—he spoke quite low, laying his hand on Naren's, and asked : "What did I say?"

Naren replied : "I did not hear distinctly."

Ramakrishna then indicated by signs that *He*, God and his own self were one.

"Yes," said Naren, "I am *He*."

"Only a line intervenes—for the enjoyment of bliss," said the Master.

"But," said the disciple, "the great remain in the world even after they have realised their liberation. They keep their own ego and its sufferings so that they may accomplish the salvation of humanity."

There was complete silence and then the Master spoke again :

"The roof is within a man's sight, but it is very difficult to reach it. . . . but he who has reached it can throw down a rope, and pull others up to him on the roof."

This was one of the days when he realised to the full the identity of all within the One Being ; when he saw that "all three were the same Substance—the victim, the block and the executioner," and he cried in a feeble voice : "My God, what a vision !" He fainted with emotion, but when he came to

himself he said : "I am well. I have never been so well." Those who knew how terrible was the disease from which he died (cancer of the throat) marvelled at the loving and kindly smile that never left him. If the glorious death upon the Cross was denied this man, who is Christ to his Indian believers, his bed of agony was no less a Cross. Nevertheless he could say :

"Only the body suffers. When the mind is united to God, no pain can be felt."

And again :

"Let the body and its sufferings occupy themselves with each other. Thou, my mind, remain in bliss. Now I and my Divine Mother are one for ever."

Three or four days before his death he called Naren, and asked that he should be left alone with him. He looked lovingly at him and passed into an ecstasy. It enveloped Naren in its folds. When he came back from the shadows, he saw Ramakrishna in tears. The Master said to him :

"To-day I have given you my all, and am now only a poor fakir, possessing nothing. By this power you will do immense good in the world, and not till it is accomplished will you return."

From that moment all his powers were transferred to Naren. The Master and the disciple were one.

## EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

By K. B. MADHAVA, M.A., A.I.A. (LOND.)

An exceptional circumstance—panic or epidemic, riches or floods, distinction or disability—invariably stimulates inquiry. Even so, exceptional children, gifted and feeble-minded alike, have engaged both hopeful and anxious consideration at the hands of scholars, publicists and the State. For it goes without saying, that a Nation's resources of intellectual talent are among the most precious it will

ever have. But at the present time, this subject commands unusual interest, first from among the votaries of science who seek to unravel the mechanism of human heredity and achievement, next from among all civilised governments who seek to provide sound schemes of national education and welfare, and finally also from among the larger public who indulge in problems of in-

ternational assessment and in policies for future recruitment of populations.

## I

At the outset it will be understood that the term "exceptional" conveys a certain dictionary sense, suggesting something unique, not common, out of the usual or ordinary way, forming an "exception" to a "rule." This connotation sets to us the problem first of a rule or generality, a trend or a tendency, which we may expect to evolve, and secondly, the task of measuring both the direction and magnitude of the failure to conform to and concord with that type; even if we may not consider the question of negotiating such variations. In this light, the exceptional child is probably a problem of measurement and statistical technique. This being so, our task is to survey what is known regarding the distribution of "natural gifts" in the community. But how to measure such natural gifts? It is not difficult to measure some physical or mental characteristics. We can measure a man's stature, and we have also means of assessing his motor and functional capacities. We have too a rough gauge of certain features of mental ability in examinations, though it is certainly very difficult to assess temperamental characters, such as, vivacity and power of concentration. The only mental characteristic of great importance in fact, of which we have extensive measurements at the present day, is intellectual performance.

Now in regard to intellectual performance, the type of measurement that has now been evolved by experimental psychologists and by pedagogues is by "tests," by 'rating' the 'responses' to certain 'stimuli.' It is not possible—nor perhaps necessary at the present day in educational world—to describe in detail either the content or schemata of tests, or even to examine the validity and reliability of such tests. We may, for

the purposes of this article, assume that an experimental study of intellect is obtained by a careful canvass of individuals, and that the final rating of each subject is expressed as a quotient, designated "I. Q." or "Intelligence Quotient," which however is independent of age, and which moreover is indicative of an intelligence above or below "normal" according as its absolute value is in excess of, or under, 100. It is no doubt a promising line of attack, but it is to be recognised that measurement is not a problem which can be solved by any single "attack," however skilfully planned or executed, nor is it independent of educational interests, or even environment. The evidence is both indirect and inferential, and although intelligence has been determined to be abiding, we must always realise the relative value of the result to the standard borne and that we have not as yet secured a precise and infallible measure, but only groups, such as demarcate "gifted," or "defective" or "neither."

It is regrettable that for substantiating the above remarks or for even illustrating them we have to depend upon "foreign" experience, and although from very, very recent date some work along this line has been in progress in India, these results are neither sufficient, efficient, nor consistent. For very extensive and intensive work, we may only quote the evidence collected by Professors Thorndike or Terman in America, or Binet in France, or that of Spearman and Cyril Burt in England, and also of such investigations as that of the Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education, or Medical Research Council in England. In the next few paragraphs I draw very freely upon these.

## II

In *The British Journal of Psychology*, Vol. XIV, an account is given of the extensive investigation of the distribution of intelligence carried out by Duff and Thomson in Northumberland



in 1922. All children in elementary schools, and most children in secondary schools, between the ages of 11 and 13 in that area, were tested and their

intelligence quotients rated. In all there were 13,625 pupils, and the distribution of I. Q.'s is as follows:

I. Q.'s	Girls	Boys	Total	% of total
140 & over	4	12	16	0.1
130-139	49	80	129	1.0
120-129	318	414	732	5.4
110-119	1146	1129	2275	16.7
100-109	1765	1833	3598	26.5
90-99	1779	1757	3536	26.0
80-89	991	981	1972	14.5
below 80	622	715	1337	9.8
Total	6674	6921	13595	100.0
Spoilt papers	21	9	30	...

With these figures—or rather percentages in the several ranges of I. Q.'s because the data in this case are not available in absolute figures—one may compare the summary of results of

testing the intelligence of a large number of London school-children published by the Medical Research Council (Report No. 33—*A Study in Vocational Guidance*):

Range of I. Q.'s	over 150	130-150	115-130	100-115	85-100	70-85	50-70	under 50
Per cent. of total	0.2	2.0	10.0	38.0	38.0	10.0	1.5	0.2

From both these it is clear that most of those tested are moderately gifted with intelligence, but there are about the same number definitely handicapped by a low native intelligence as there are unusually well endowed with natural gifts. This evidence is exceedingly interesting, and when it is recognised that this situation is substantially similar for other mental and psychical characteristics, the emphasis is greater. A number of problems both of diagnostic and of prognostic value are raised, and both the citizen and the State are concerned with the discernment of these exceptional elements, with their location in social or occupational groups, with the evolution or perfection of that machinery which will sift the more from the less intelligent

and direct them into occupations suitable to their capacities, and finally, with the conservation, guidance and control of all exceptional elements by methods which are solely suited for these purposes.

To one other matter of no little interest available in this investigation, I may now refer. In this investigation information as to the occupations of the fathers of children was obtained in all but 176 cases out of a total exceeding 13,000. It was thus possible to place each father in the occupational group to which he belonged, and to calculate the average intelligence quotient for the children of the fathers in each group, and the summary is somewhat as follows:

Occupations of fathers.	Average I.Q.'s of children.
Professional	112.2
Managerial	110.0
Higher commercial	109.3
Army, Navy, Police, Postmen	105.5
Shopkeeping	105.0

Occupations of fathers.	Average I.Q.'s of children.		
Engineering	...	...	102.9
Foremen	...	...	102.7
Building	...	...	102.0
Metal workers, Ship-builders	...	...	100.9
Miscellaneous industrial workers	...	...	100.6
Miners and quarrymen	...	...	97.6
Agriculture (all classes)	...	...	97.6
Low grade occupations	...	...	96.0

An examination of this table shows that the children of the more skilled and better paid fathers have on the whole the higher intelligence quotients. The correspondence between the average intelligence of the children and the demands which the occupations make upon the mental faculties of the fathers is in fact remarkable. At the same time it must be remembered that intelligence tests, as we may have already indicated, almost certainly fail to separate entirely the effect of environment and heredity, so that we may not lay too much stress on innate endowment as the sole differentiating element between one group and another. On this matter it is rather dangerous to dogmatise. We can only gather a few lessons. Indeed, genius and imbecile pass one another in our streets although it is true that judging by intellect alone, we might fairly place the genius in one species and the imbecile in another, and discover the huge gap that may exist between the most abundantly, and the least adequately, endowed. The second lesson is, that these well distinguished groups—consisting of not negligible numbers—constitute problems in themselves baffling the attempts of all those who have as experts to minister to them. A third conclusion is also possible, though not directly deducible, from the evidence so far produced alone; *viz.*, that the best—and likewise the worst—do not beget their own, either the best, or the worst, but that continuously there is a tendency as time goes on and generations pass on, for reversion to mediocrity. There is in any case, a continually shifting mechanism at work which, very incomplete though it may be, does something

to sort out the members of the community according to the their inborn intelligence and to allocate the more intelligent to the more skilled and better posts, for instance. This mechanism is in part directly designed also to that end. We refer to the educational ladder; and that ladder is continually being broadened too; elaborate methods are being evolved for vocational guidance; the entrance to most professions is now barred to those below a certain level of intellectual attainment. In consequence we may expect the existing average intellectual differences between members of various occupational groups to grow larger. These considerations make the necessity for an inquiry into the recruitment of future populations a matter of great importance. And we may say, that a census of inborn qualities of the community is just as desirable as a census, say of birth-places, or of incomes. As yet, however, no plans have been laid for the taking of such censuses.

### III

All that has been now accomplished along this line is either through the insight and enthusiasm of researchers like Galton, Woods, Havelock Ellis, Lippincott, etc., or through the foresight and generosity of philanthropists who have brought into being institutions like Galton Laboratory of Eugenics in England, the Eugenics Laboratory of the Carnegie Institution in New York, etc. The publication of Galton's *Hereditary Genius* in 1869, marks the beginning of a new era. Since that date the interest in individual differences, and their causes has grown until these promise to become

national issues on such problems as selective immigration, the evils of differential birth rates, special training for the gifted, and the economic reward for creative talent. Indeed, both scientific and popular interest along these lines has been greatly intensified by recent developments in the psychological methods of measuring intelligence, which have furnished conclusive proof that native differences in intelligence are universal phenomena and that it is possible to evaluate them. Educators, especially, have been quick to appreciate the practical significance of such differences, first for the training of backward and defective children and more recently for the education of the gifted. The National Society for the Study of Education in America, for instance, has since 1920 devoted two whole yearbooks for the results of the classroom problems of the gifted children. The more classical investigations are those by F. A. Woods: *Mental and Moral Heredity in Royalty*, Gunn: *Kin of Genius*, and other recent inquiries by Havelock Ellis and the Eugenic Society. Various other investigations are also afoot, and the problems of genius among children at school—along its three lines, nature, origin and cultivation—have been best described in Terman's *Genetic Studies of Genius* just completed at the Stanford University in America. I indicate in the next paragraphs the lines along which that inquiry proceeds, but I may state also that the closely akin problems of the criminal and the mentally deficient have received the most careful attention. Dr. C. Goring's work is classical, and recently a Report on Mental Deficiency by the Joint Committee of the Board of Education and the Board of Control has also been published by H. M. Stationery Office.

The study organised by Professor Lewis Terman at the Stanford University about the nature of gifted children covered several points of attack. First there were anthropometric measurements and medical examination of sub-

jects. Next there were records of family history, home and school progress. Finally there were reports of intellectual, social and activity interests. This is obviously a very extensive canvass and its precise scope may be indicated by the following few summaries.

The purpose of the anthropometric study of children—gifted and otherwise—was fourfold: "(1) to secure an accurate picture of the status of physical development of each of the gifted children through a series of selected physical measurements; (2) to make a comparison of their total and partial growth with that of other groups; (3) to determine the relationship of the physical traits measured; and (4) to analyse the correspondence of the physical status and mental status of this group of children." To this end some 37 anthropometric measures of the head, shoulders, arms, chest, hips, legs, grip, breathing capacity, besides height and weight, were carefully obtained and the resulting statistics analysed in the most perfect manner. It is only sufficient to say that the results of this investigation showed "that the gifted group is, as a whole, physically superior to the various groups used for comparison," and that "the gifted children deviate in a positive direction from the normal American standards (appropriate to the age) in weight, height, breathing capacity, and a large proportion have broad shoulders and hips, strong muscles and well developed lungs." The health and physical history of the child was made up by three reports—the home, the school and the medical examiner. The home blank covered information regarding length of pregnancy, mother's health during pregnancy, weight at birth, conditions at birth, infant feeding, early health, accidents, habits, and habitus. The medical examinations included the usual schedules *re* skin, head, ears, eyes, nose, mouth, chest, abdomen, bones and joints, muscles and tendons, urine and blood, genitals and extremities and glands and radiographs when necessary. The findings are very

interesting, and I should at once say, that there is no shred of evidence to support the wide-spread opinion that typically the intellectually precocious child is weak, undersized, or nervously unstable. "In so far as the gifted child departs at all from the average on these traits it is pretty certainly in the other direction, but (taking a comprehensive view of the subject) "the facts seem to be that his deviation from the norm on physical traits is in most cases very small! indeed with his deviation in intellectual and volitional traits. Even the slight superiority that he enjoys within his physical equipment may or may not be due to endowment primarily. It might be accounted for—mainly, if not entirely,—by such factors as diet and medical care and other environmental influences." It was discovered, for instance, that the mean birth weight of the gifted group was approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  lb. above the norm according to accepted standards, that the proportion of breast-feeding was considerably higher than for the general population, that the ages of "learning to walk" and "learning to talk" averaged from about one-and-half months to three-and-half months less than mean ages for normal children; that even pubescence occurs on the average somewhat earlier among gifted than among unselected boys. Dr. Albert Moore, one of the medical examiners, remarks: "I have a strong conviction that, other things being equal, there is a direct correlation between physical health and mentality among children when studied in groups."

It has always been considered that the records of family history, home and school progress afford very reliable diagnostic purpose in discovering giftedness among siblings. In this study by Terman and others an extensive inquiry of the heredity of gifted children was undertaken of all the intellectually superior relatives. To this end the entries in the Hall of Fame, *Who's Who*, *Dictionary of National Biography*, *Appleton's Cyclopaedia* and the *National Encyclopedia of American Biography*,

etc., in addition to home information were very carefully sifted and pursued. No account need be given here of the laws of family resemblances, or of the transmission of superior mental abilities, but the data collected "gave considerable support to Galton's theory as to the hereditary nature of genius." This theory states that in spite of exceptions and contradictions, the genius reproduces the genius and the imbecile tends to reproduce the imbecile. In regard to the home "vital statistics," it is discovered too, that the longevity of grandparents of gifted subjects was in excess of the expected, infant mortality and proportion of miscarriages to pregnancies less in this group, and also that the gifted preponderated among the first-born in the data on the order of birth. In regard to home and early school accomplishment, a thorough canvass has been undertaken, and it appears that, in spite of the fact that very few parents have carried out any systematic scheme of child-training, the indications of superior intelligence most often are quick understanding, insatiable curiosity, extensive information, retentive memory, early speech, unusual vocabulary, with the manifestation in most cases either of superior ability in arithmetic, or of music, drawing, painting or dramatics. Prof. Terman reviewing his evidence is satisfied that "although the home environment of the gifted child has been, on the whole above the average, nothing has been found to warrant the belief that the superior intellectual attainments of the gifted group are in any considerable degree the product of artificial stimulation or forced culture."

It is in the last aspect—"intellectual, social and activity interests"—that considerable scope exists for the psychological and other tests that we now hear of so much. These consist in rating according to well devised means abilities such as, arithmetic, reasoning, word-building, biographical and geographical information, science information and so on, on one side, and on the other, play

and amusement interests of the "active solitary class" (such as, spinning tops, rolling hoops, using tools, etc.), of the "social-active" class (such as hide-and-seek, baseball, follow-the-leader), or the "social-quiet" class (such as cards, "playing" school, etc.). Reading interests in regard to quantity, quality and variety constitute a fertile means of measuring intellectuality, and the tests may also be extended to cover character, personality and trustworthiness ratings, etc. Several very interesting conclusions have been arrived at: first, the many-sided richness of the mental, social and activity interests of the gifted child; next, the general excess of achievement of the gifted child in an all-rounded way; the wide, deep and abiding reading interests of the gifted child; and others of similar import. In particular, Professor Terman says in more or less emphatic language that "the one-sidedness of precocious children is mythical," "that no observant judge of human character should be surprised that the gifted surpass the unselected in honesty, trustworthiness and similar moral traits," and that "the common opinion that the intellectually superior children are characterised by a deficiency of play interests appears to be wholly unfounded."

#### IV

Such are the conclusions of very extensive scientific modern studies in regard to the nature of giftedness. Feeble-mindedness too has its stable laws, although we need not go into them here. The culture and guidance

of these exceptional elements are of course different problems equally wide, and certainly more difficult of control.

It may be asked whether intellectual eminence too is a relative fact even as wealth or property are, whether Croesus, who accumulated a few thousands, or at most a few millions, or Rockefeller who accumulated billions, was richer. Also whether there may not be mute inglorious Miltons, and that "genius," like murder, "will out," and that therefore if it does not appear it is not there to appear. Nobody can deny the compelling force of environment, the possibilities and limitations of surroundings, and of the differences in structure between the ancient and the modern world, between one community and another, and between one opportunity and another. But the fact remains that the differences are in the main due to natural powers and aptitudes; that if Roosevelt had been in Africa, he would, without being the Roosevelt he has been, would have been the big hunter, "Buanno Tumbo," probably. I am not here developing the line of race culture through marriage laws, and Eugenical control, but I remind my readers Ruskin's thought that "There is no ascertained limit as yet to the nobleness of person and mind which the human creature may attain, by preserving the observance of the laws of God respecting its birth and training." We have in this increasingly material world transferred our hopes from heaven to earth and from ourselves to our children.

## HOW SRI RAMAKRISHNA TESTED HIS DISCIPLES

BY SWAMI SARADANANDA

Sri Ramakrishna said to Keshab Chandra Sen, when the Brahmo Samaj was split over the Cooch Behar marriage: "It is no wonder that your Samaj breaks up. You accept all as your followers without testing them. But I do not accept anyone without doing so." It was indeed wonderful

in how many different ways the Master used to examine the devotees that came to him. He was illiterate; yet he mastered many wonderful methods of gauging human character. Was it due to the revival of knowledge acquired in past lives? Or to his supersensuous vision and omni-

science attained through *Sādhana*? Or to his being a Divine Incarnation as he sometimes described himself to his intimate disciples?

We always found that whenever any person came to him, he would look at him with special attention. And if he felt attracted towards the visitor, he would talk about spiritual things with him and ask him to visit him occasionally. As days passed and the man visited him, Sri Ramakrishna would observe, unknown to him, the shape of his body and limbs, the nature of his thoughts, the strength of his carnal desires and the extent of his love for him. From these minute observations, he would arrive at a sure conclusion about his latent spirituality; and before long he would have a firm grasp of his character. And if he felt the necessity of knowing any hidden facts of his inner being, he would know them by his keen *Yogic* vision. About this he once said to us: "During the small hours of the morning, while awake and alone I think of the spiritual welfare of you, the Divine Mother shows and lets me know how far one has advanced in the spiritual path, why another cannot progress, and so on." From this, however, let us not conclude that his *Yogic* power was active only at that time. From his talks at other times we understood that he could ascend at will to high states of spiritual consciousness and obtain similar visions. For he said: "Just as by merely looking at a glass almirah one can see all its contents, so I can know the inmost thoughts, tendencies and everything of a man by merely looking at him."

The above, however, was only his general method of judging a character. In the case of his special devotees, he used to apply other methods also. In fact, their case was special in various senses. His first meetings with them came about always in a

peculiar manner: he generally used to be in an exalted mood at those times. And he would intuitively know their natures,—the facts of their inner life would be spontaneously revealed to him. The explanation is simple. By wonderful spiritual practices, he had made his body and mind excellent instruments for retaining and communicating subtle spiritual forces. Thus whenever any devotees approached him, his mind would be at once coloured by the same spiritual outlooks as their own, and would automatically correspond to their spiritual levels, and the facts of their inner life would become at once patent to him. This, it must be admitted, was a special method. It was an intuitive process. But as we have said, he also applied the general methods, the methods of observation, to his special devotees, and these can be described under the following four heads:

## II

I. Sri Ramakrishna would ascertain the predominant tendencies of his devotees by observing their physiognomy and other bodily signs.

Physiology and psychology now prove that every definite thought when it becomes active, leaves an impress on the brain and the body. The Vedas and other scriptures have always affirmed this fact. All Hindu philosophical and religious books declare that the mind builds up the body, and that a man's physical form changes according as his thoughts and propensities are good or evil. Therefore, many proverbs are current amongst us about ascertaining a man's nature from the forms of his body and limbs. And that is also why on the occasions of marriage, initiation and other ceremonies, the examination of the hands, feet and other parts of the persons concerned is considered necessary.

It is no wonder that Sri Ramakrishna, believing as he did in the

scriptures, should examine the forms of the body and the limbs of his disciples. He would relate many facts about this in course of conversation. And we would wonder-struck listen to his descriptions of the various limbs and features of man, as he compared their forms with the objects of everyday life, and explained their special significance. About the eyes he would say: "Some have eyes like lotus petals; some like bulls' eyes; and some possess the eyes of a *Yogi* or a *Deva* (god). Those who have eyes like lotus petals are endowed with good and spiritual tendencies. Those whose eyes are like a bull's, have strong sex-passions. The *Yogi's* eyes have an upward look and a reddish tinge. The divine eye is not very large but is long and stretches to the ear. If a man casts side-glances or looks from the corner of the eye while talking, know him to be more intelligent than the average person." Or he would thus speak of the peculiarities of the body: "Those who have a devotional temperament have naturally a soft body, and the joints of their hands and feet are supple; and even if their body be lean, the muscles and tendons are so shaped that it does not appear as angular." In order to ascertain the turn of a person's mind, whether it was towards good or evil, he would weigh his hand in his own from fingers to elbow. If he found the weight less than usual, he would conclude that the mind was towards good. We may cite an instance. While Sri Ramakrishna was staying in the Cossipore Garden suffering from cancer, the younger brother of the present writer came one day to visit the Master. The Master was much pleased to see him. He made him sit near him, questioned him about various things and gave him many spiritual instructions. When the present writer came to Sri Ramakrishna, he asked him: "Is this your younger brother? He is a fine boy and more intelligent than you. Let me

see if he has good or bad tendency." So saying he took his hand into his own and weighing it said: "Yes, he has good tendency." He then asked: "Shall I draw him (that is, draw his mind away from the world and turn it towards God)? What do you say?" We replied: "Yes, Sir, please do so." But Sri Ramakrishna thought for a while and said: "No, no more. I have taken one and if I take this one also, your parents, specially your mother, would be much aggrieved. I have displeased many a *Shakti* (woman) in my life. No more now."

The Master used to say: "Men having different mental tendencies have also different ways of functioning physiologically, such as in sleeping. Experts can find indications of character also in them. For examples, all people do not breathe in the same way in sleep. A worldly man breathes in one way, a man of renunciation in another way."

Of women, Sri Ramakrishna used to say that there are two kinds, *Vidyā Shakti*, of god-like nature, and the *Avidyā Shakti*, of the nature of *Asura* or low nature. "Those of godly nature," he said, "take little sleep and food. They do not care for the sense-life, they like to talk with their husbands on religious subjects, and they save their husbands from evil thoughts and impure acts by filling them with high spiritual inspirations. They help their husbands to live a spiritual life so that they (husbands) may ultimately realise God. But the *Avidyā Shaktis* are just the opposite. They eat much and sleep much and they always want their husbands to think of nothing else than their happiness. They become annoyed with their husbands if they talk about religion."

In this way Sri Ramakrishna told many things. Once he examined Naren's (of Swami Vivekananda) body that way. He was very much pleased with the result. He said:

your body. Only during sleep you breathe heavily. *Yogis* say that it indicates a short life."

### III

II and III. The Master's second and third means of knowing a man's nature were the observation of his mental tendencies and his attachment to woman and gold as expressed in little and ordinary actions.

Silently he used to watch all those who came to visit him at Dakshineswar. And when he had decided to accept one as his disciple, he would teach him in many ways and sometimes would scold him to correct his defects. After studying a new-comer he would decide whether he would train him to become a good householder or whether he would train him to become a *Sannyāsīn*. First he would ask whether he was married or single and whether he had sufficient means to maintain himself, or if he were to renounce the world whether he had anyone to take his place in maintaining his family.

His love went out especially towards young students. He used to say: "Their minds are not yet divided in many interests, as wife, children, desire for wealth, fame, etc. If they are trained properly, they can give their whole mind to God." Therefore, he loved to instruct them in the spiritual path. He used to say: "The mind is like a packet of mustard seeds. If you once let it be scattered, it is very difficult to gather the seeds again." Or he would say: "Once a bird is full grown, it is difficult to teach it to say *Rādhā-Krishna*." Or again he would say: "If a cow steps on an unburned tile the footprint can easily be smoothed over. But when the tile is burned, no impression can be removed." He would, therefore, question the young boys carefully to learn the natural tendency of their minds, whether it was towards *pravritti* or worldly enjoyment, or towards *nivritti* or re-

nunciation. And he would train them towards *nivritti*, if he found them fit for it. Through questioning he would also learn whether the boy was unsophisticated and truthful, whether he really practised what he professed, whether he used discrimination or not in all his actions, and how far he could understand his instructions. All these he would ascertain very carefully.

Once he asked a young student who came to him: "Why don't you marry?" The boy replied: "Sir, my mind is not yet under my control. If I marry now, I shall have no discrimination of right and wrong in my attachment to my wife. If I can conquer lust, then I shall marry." Sri Ramakrishna understood that though the boy had strong attractions for sense-joy, yet his mind was tending towards the path of *nivritti*. He laughed and said: "When you have conquered lust, you will not need to marry at all."

Talking to another boy at Dakshineswar, he said: "You see, I cannot always keep my cloth on. Sometimes it comes loose and drops off without my noticing it. I am an old man, and I move about naked. Yet I do not feel ashamed. What is the reason? Formerly I did not notice at all whether people saw me naked or not. But now I notice that some people feel embarrassed, so I keep my cloth in my lap. Can you go naked, like me, before others?" The boy said: "Sir, I do not know. But if you tell me to do so I think I can." Sri Ramakrishna said: "Try it. Take off your cloth, wrap it round your head and walk around the Temple courtyard." The boy said: "No, Sir, that I cannot do. I can do that only before you." Sri Ramakrishna said: "Yes, others also say that they feel the same way. They feel no shame before me, but they do before others."

Once it was the second day of the bright fortnight. We had all retired.



The moonlight was beautiful and the tide on the Ganges was always a grand sight on such evenings. In the middle of the night Sri Ramakrishna called us and said: "Come, come and see the incoming tide." He himself then went to the embankment. Seeing the calm water of the Ganges changing into huge waves by the tide and splash against the embankment, he was as happy as a boy and he began to jump.

Now, after rising from bed, we had to arrange our cloth as we were fast asleep. And that made us a little late, and by the time we came to the embankment the greatest beauty was over. Only a few were in time to see a part of it. Sri Ramakrishna was absorbed in his own joy. When it was over he turned to us and said: "How did you enjoy it?" Hearing that we had come too late because we had to dress, he said: "You fools, do you think the tide will wait for you to dress? Why did not you leave your cloth behind as I did?"

Sometimes he would ask a disciple if he wanted to marry and earn money. If he replied that he would not marry but would have to enter service for earning money, it would not satisfy the Master who was a tremendous lover of freedom. He would say: "If you do not marry, why then be the slave of someone all your life? Give your whole heart to God and worship Him. Being born in the world this should be man's highest ambition. But if that is not possible, then marry. But make the realisation of God your highest goal, and maintain your life ever honestly." Such were Sri Ramakrishna's views. If, therefore, any disciples whom he considered specially or even fairly gifted spiritually, married or entered service to earn money, or worked for fame and wasted his energy, he would take these very much to heart.

One of his young disciples (Swami Niranjanananda) accepted employment to support his mother.

When Sri Ramakrishna heard about it, he said: "If it were not that you have done so for your old mother, I would have never looked at you again." When another disciple came to Cossipore garden to see Sri Ramakrishna after his marriage, Sri Ramakrishna wept as if he had lost a son. He put his arms round the young man's neck and crying, said repeatedly: "Try not to sink in the world forever by forgetting God."

All scriptures teach that progress in the spiritual path is impossible without sincere faith. Knowing this, some of us would make it a point to believe in everything and every person. But Sri Ramakrishna warned us against that. Though he asked us to travel along the spiritual path through faith, he never asked us to cease to discriminate. One should use the sense of right and wrong both in the spiritual path and in worldly matters,—such, we think, was his view.

Once one of the young disciples (Swami Yogananda) went to a shop and bought an iron pot. He appealed to the religious feeling of the shop-keeper and did not examine the pot closely. Afterwards he found that the pot leaked. Sri Ramakrishna scolded him and said: "Because you are a devotee of God, does that mean that you should be a fool? Do you think a shop-keeper opens a shop to practise religion? Why did you not examine the pan before you purchased it? Never act so foolishly again. When you go out shopping, first know the real price by going round several shops and thoroughly examine the thing you buy. And do not fail to demand the little extras where allowed."

Sometimes some persons, having begun the practice of religion, become so kind-hearted that their kindness itself becomes a bondage to them and even drags them down from the path of spirituality. Such often is the case with soft-hearted persons. Such

people Sri Ramakrishna would instruct to be firm and resolved. But those who were by nature domineering and harsh, he would ask to be gentle. Swami Yogananda was of a very mild nature. We have never seen him getting angry or abusing anyone though sometimes there was reason enough for it. Though quite against his nature and inclinations, through his tender nature he suddenly got married. His mother entreated him and seeing her weep he had not the strength to refuse. It was only through the grace of Sri Ramakrishna that he was saved from a life of bitter disappointment and repentance. Sri Ramakrishna watched over him with great care and tried in every way to cure his too great mildness. Just one instance to show how even through the smallest matters Sri Ramakrishna would instruct us:

A cockroach was once found among Sri Ramakrishna's clothes. He asked Swami Yogananda to take it out and kill it. Swami Yogananda took it outside the room and let it go without killing it. Sri Ramakrishna asked: "Have you killed it?" Swami Yogananda said: "No, Sir, I let it go." Then Sri Ramakrishna scolded him and said: "I told you to kill the cockroach, but you let it go. You should always do as I ask you to do. Otherwise later in serious matters also you will follow your own judgment and come to grief."

Swami Yogananda one day came by a row-boat from Calcutta to Dakshineswar. One of the passengers asked him where he was going. He told him that he was going to Dakshineswar to see Sri Ramakrishna. Hearing this the other passenger began to revile Sri Ramakrishna's character. He said: "Sri Ramakrishna only pretends. He cats well, sleeps on a bed and still he claims to be a saint, and he spoils the young boys." Swami Yogananda was very much pained to hear the man talk like that about Sri Ramakrishna. He thought of rebuking him. But his

gentle nature came up and he thought: "Well, people do not know Sri Ramakrishna, therefore they have queer ideas about him and blame him. What can I do?" So he kept silent.

Coming to Dakshineswar he told Sri Ramakrishna about it. He thought Sri Ramakrishna did not care what people thought or said about him, and so the matter would end there. But he was mistaken. Sri Ramakrishna took it quite seriously. He said: "That man abused me for nothing and you kept silent! Do you know what the *Shāstras* say? You must cut the head of him who blames your *Guru* or leave his presence at once. And you did not even protest against these false accusations?"

But Sri Ramakrishna trained each disciple in his own way, according to his needs. So the treatment of one would be quite the reverse sometimes of the treatment of another. In the same case, under the same circumstances, Sri Ramakrishna told his different disciples different ways of conduct. Let us illustrate this. We have just had Swami Yogananda's case. Now let us see what happened to Swami Niranjananda under almost the same conditions.

Swami Niranjananda was of a rough and ready temper. Now once while he was going to Dakshineswar in a row-boat, some fellow-passengers spoke ill of Sri Ramakrishna. At first Swami Niranjan protested vehemently. But when they continued their slandering talk, he became very angry. He was so angry that he threatened to upset the boat and drown them all. He was a strong man and a good swimmer. They all got frightened and to save themselves began to pacify him in many ways. And then he calmed down.

Now Sri Ramakrishna came to hear about it. He scolded Swami Niranjan, saying: "Anger is like a Pariah—untouchable, you should never yield to it. The anger of a good man disappears like a line drawn in the water."

Mean people will say many things, and if you want to quarrel about that, you will pass your whole life quarrelling. You should think in such cases: What are people?—they are like worms. Pity them and overlook their weakness. Think of what a wrong deed you were about to do through your anger. What was the fault of the boatmen that you should have put them also in danger?"

His lady disciples also he would train similarly. Once he said to one of them, who was particularly soft-hearted: "Suppose someone you know takes great pains to help you on all occasions, but you feel that that is because he is under the spell of your beauty, which he is too weak to break. Would you be kind to the man? Won't you, on the other hand, deal a hard kick on his chest and live always away from him? So you see, you cannot be always kind to all persons under all conditions. There must be a limit and you must discriminate."

We remember the case of a young man named Harish. He was a strong young man. He had a beautiful wife and a boy, and had enough to support them. Coming to Dakshineswar a few times he felt a strong disgust for a worldly life. His simple nature, his devotion and gentleness made him very dear to Sri Ramakrishna. So Sri Ramakrishna accepted him as a disciple. From that time he passed most of his time at Dakshineswar serving Sri Ramakrishna and meditating on the Lord. His guardians began to oppress him, his father-in-law asked him to go back to his home, his wife wept, but nothing could dissuade him from his purpose. He paid no attention to all these entreaties and threatenings. He remained silent and went on in his own way. Sri Ramakrishna, to teach us through his example, pointed out to us how calm and steadfast Harish was, and he would say: "Those who are real men should be dead though living, like Harish."

One day Sri Ramakrishna was told that because Harish had left them, the whole family felt very sorry and his wife refused to eat or drink. Hearing this Harish remained silent as before. But Sri Ramakrishna, in order to try his mind, said to him: "Your wife is so very anxious to see you. Why don't you go to her once? She has none to look after her. What is the harm consoling her once this time?" Harish became sad and answered: "Sir, that is not the proper occasion to show compassion. If I go there, I may fall in bondage again and forget the highest object of life. Pray, do not ask me to do that." Sri Ramakrishna was highly satisfied with his reply, and he often repeated his words to us, praising his spirit of renunciation.

We may mention many instances of Sri Ramakrishna's observing the trifling details of our daily life and thereby understanding our mental qualities and defects. Once he saw Swami Niranjanananda taking too much *ghee* (clarified butter), and he said: "Why do you take so much *ghee*? Would you afterwards run away with somebody's daughter or daughter-in-law?" (He meant that such rich food would make it difficult for the disciple to control his passions.) When one of the boys in spite of his prohibition, began the study of medicine, he said: "You are to renounce your desires, you are increasing them instead! How then would you make any spiritual progress?"

He would not be satisfied with merely knowing the characters of his disciples, he would also try to remedy their defects. And he would also often enquire about their spiritual progress. And in order to ascertain it, he would always adopt a special means, which was his fourth method in examining his disciples.

#### IV

IV. Sri Ramakrishna would often enquire if the regard and devotion for

him, which had first brought his disciples to him, were increasing or not.

This method of enquiry would take the following form: He would sometimes question them as to how far they could understand his spiritual conditions and conduct. Or he would observe if they put complete faith in his words. Or he would introduce them to those other disciples, an intimacy with whom, he thought, would deepen their own spiritual moods. And he would not be finally certain of the spiritual future of a disciple, until he had learnt to accept Sri Ramakrishna of his own accord and intuitively, as the expression of the highest spiritual ideal of the world.

This may astonish some. But a little thought will indicate that it was only reasonable and natural. For what else could he do, knowing as he did that there was an unprecedented influx of spirituality through him? He had gone through a long and superhuman *tapasyâ* and meditation and had realised *Samâdhi*. As a result, all his egoism had been totally destroyed, and all chance of any delusion or error had been eliminated for ever. Necessarily, therefore, the complete memory of his past and omniscience revived in him; and he felt in his inmost soul that the spiritual ideal that was manifested through his mind and body, had never before been witnessed in the world and he naturally concluded that whoever would, with full understanding, seek to mould his life in the light of the ideal that was embodied in him, would find his spiritual progress easy and smooth in this age. Need we then wonder that he enquired of his disciples if they understood him as the highest spiritual ideal, and were trying to build their life after its model?

The Master would variously express this conviction of his. He would say: "The coins current in the reigns of the Nawabs become invalid during the Emperor's rule." "If you follow my instructions, you will reach the goal

is the last (that is to say, those who have been so far freed from their past *karma* that they would not have to be born again), will come here and accept the spiritual ideas and ideals of this place." "Your *Ista* (Chosen Deity) is (*pointing to himself*) within this. If you meditate on this, you meditate on your *Ista*." We shall give a few illustrations:

All the disciples of the Master knew that he sometimes asked them what they thought of him. This question was put after a disciple had been intimately known to the Master. Not always so however; for sometimes he would put this question to a disciple even on the first meeting. But such disciples belonged to the group whom he had known long long ago in a superconscious vision. The replies that he received were various. Some said: "You are a true saint." Some said: "You are a true devotee of God." Some said: "You are a *Mahâpurusha*, —a great soul." Some said: "You are an emancipated person." Some said: "You are an incarnation of God." Some said: "You are Sri Chaitanya himself." Some said: "You are Shiva Himself." Some said: "You are God," and so on. Some who belonged to the Brahmo Samaj and did not, therefore, believe in Divine Incarnations, said: "You are a lover of God, of the same rank as Sri Krishna, Buddha, Christ and Sri Chaitanya." A Christian, named Williams,\* said: "You are the Christ Himself, the Son of God." We cannot say how far the boy-disciples really understood the Master. But their answers at least indicated what they thought of him and what was their conception of God. The Master also evidently took the answers in that light and behaved with and instructed them

\*We are reliably informed that Williams, after he had seen the Master a few times, became convinced of his Divinity. He gave up the world at the Master's advice, repaired to the Himalayas to the north of the Punjab, and there passed away after practis-

according to their spiritual outlooks and temperaments. For the Master never interfered with anyone's moods and outlook; on the other hand, helped him to grow in his own way that he might eventually realise the Highest Truth. But he always carefully observed whether the disciples replied from sincere conviction or merely copied others.

We shall mention the instance of Purna. The Master himself testified to his deep spirituality and reckoned him as one of his chief disciples; in fact, he gave him a place immediately next to Swami Vivekananda. Purna was only thirteen years old when he first met the Master. But he felt deeply moved even at that first meeting. When he next came to the Master, the Master asked him in what light he regarded him. Purna replied with a good deal of emotion: "You are God Himself, incarnated in flesh and blood!" Sri Ramakrishna was surprised and delighted with the answer. He blessed him from the bottom of his heart and initiated him into the mystery of *Shakti* worship.

Here is another instance: There was a picture in Sri Ramakrishna's room in which, Sri Chaitanya and devotees were shown as absorbed in singing the praise of God. One day Sri Ramakrishna pointed it out to a friend of ours, and said: "Do you see how absorbed they are in singing the praise of the Lord?"

*Friend*: "They are all low class people."

*Master*: "What do you say? You must not say so."

*Friend*: "Yes, Sir, I come from Nadia.\* I know only low class people become *Vaishnavas*."

*Master*: "Oh, you come from Nadia?—Then I salute you a second time.† (*Pointing to himself*) Well,

\*Nadia is the origin and stronghold of Bengal *Vaishnavism*.

†It was the custom of Sri Ramakrishna to salute one as soon as he met him. That is why he said 'second time.'

Ram and others say that this is a Divine Incarnation. What do you think?"

*Friend*: "They estimate you very poorly, Sir."

*Master*: "What! They call me a Divine Incarnation and you think that a poor estimate?"

*Friend*: "Yes, Sir. An *Avatāra* is a part of God, but I look upon you as Shiva Himself."

*Master*: "Indeed!"

*Friend*: "So indeed I think you. What can I do? You asked me to meditate on Shiva. But though I try daily, I cannot do so. Whenever I sit in meditation, your loving and blissful face appears before me in a luminous form. I cannot replace it by the form of Shiva, nor do I like to do so. So I think you as Shiva Himself."

*Master*: (*smiling*) "Is that so? But I know, I am like an insignificant hair of your head. (*Both laughed*). However, I am satisfied,—I had been anxious about you."

The significance of the Master's last words was not perhaps quite evident to our friend at that time. We remember that whenever in such cases the Master expressed satisfaction with us, we would be filled with a great joy and care little to go into his inner meaning. Now we understand the reason of the Master's satisfaction at our friend: he had accepted him as the highest spiritual ideal.

The Master was very careful that the disciples properly studied all his ways before they accepted him as the highest ideal. He would often say to us: "Watch a *Sādhu* by day and by night, and then trust him." He encouraged us to see if a *Sādhu* practised what he taught. He would tell us never to trust a man whose actions did not tally with his words, and whose mind was not one with his lips (words).

Thus encouraged, we would carefully observe the ways of the Master. Some of us went so far as to even test him. But he gladly bore with all

sincere desire to confirm our faith in him.

Jogin, who afterwards became Swami Yogananda, was one of the principal disciples of the Master. His home was very near to the Dakshineswar Temple; he could, therefore, pass long hours in the company of the Master. One evening, Jogin, with the Master's permission, decided to spend the night with him, with a view to serve him in case of need. They went to bed. About midnight Jogin suddenly woke up to find the door of the room open and Sri Ramakrishna absent. At first he thought he might be pacing outside. But he did not find him there. Suddenly a suspicion flitted across his mind—could he have gone to meet his wife, thus acting contrary to his profession? Unpleasant though it was, he resolved to ascertain the truth about it, and kept his watch upon the door of the concert-room where the Holy Mother lived. Suddenly he heard the sound of slippers from the direction of the *Panchavati*. A moment later, Sri Ramakrishna stood by his side. "Well, what do you want here?" he asked. Jogin hung down his head in shame for having doubted the Master's sincerity and could not utter a word. The Master understood the whole thing in a moment and relieved the penitent boy, saying: "Well done! You must examine a *Sādhu* by day and by night, and then believe in him." Though forgiven, Jogin could not sleep any more that night.

## V

In conclusion, we may briefly delineate how Sri Ramakrishna examined Narendra (Swami Vivekananda) and what conclusions he formed about him.

Sri Ramakrishna carefully observed Narendra's every action and movement ever since he first came to Dakshineswar. From this he came to feel that spiritual earnestness, courage, self-restraint, heroism, self-sacrifice for noble causes and similar other noble qualities existed in a developed

form in him. He understood that noble qualities were naturally so predominant in him, that even under adverse circumstances and temptations, he would never succumb to and do anything mean. As regards his devotion to truth, the Master had noted his utter truthfulness. He thus implicitly trusted in whatever Narendra said, and felt deeply that very soon Narendra would reach a state where nothing but truth would issue from his lips even under confusion, and whatever casual desires arose in his mind would be fulfilled. He would, therefore, encourage him still further in truthfulness, and say: "Whoever holds to truth in word, thought and action, is blessed by the vision of God who is 'Truth Itself';" and "One who observes truth for twelve years in thought, word and deed, reaches a state in which whatever he resolves comes true."

We remember a funny incident about Sri Ramakrishna's belief in Naren's truthfulness. In the course of his conversation Sri Ramakrishna once mentioned that there comes a stage in the life of the *Bhakta*, which is like that of the *Chātaka* bird. This bird will drink rain-water only, and that, when it falls from the clouds. So it is always watching the sky in the hope of rain falling. *Bhaktas* in that state depend on God alone to appease the thirst of their heart. As the bird watches the sky, so these *Bhaktas* always look up to God for all their needs. Naren was hearing this. Then he suddenly exclaimed: "Sir, though it is the common belief that the *Chātaka* bird drinks only rain-water, it is not a fact that it does not take other water. I have seen these birds drink from rivers and ponds." Sri Ramakrishna said: "Is that so? Do they drink like other birds? Then I am mistaken. If you have seen it, then there is no doubt about it." But Sri Ramakrishna, simple as a boy, was a little disturbed in mind. He thought:

also be mistaken in other ways." It made him very sad. After a few days Naren called Sri Ramakrishna and said: "Sir, see, a *Chātaka* bird is drinking Ganges water." Sri Ramakrishna rushed out of the room and said: "Where? where?" When they came near the spot, what did they see but that it was one of the small-sized bats? Then Sri Ramakrishna laughed and said: "You rogue, it is a bat. You have given me so much trouble for nothing. Now I shall be wiser and not believe everything you say."

It is often seen in men that as soon as they come in the presence of women, they become softer than is accountable by only a sense of politeness, respect and appreciation of beauty. This, according to the *Shāstras*, is the result of certain *Samskāras* deeply hidden in the heart. But in Naren we did not find that. Sri Ramakrishna noticed this, and he was, therefore, convinced that Naren would never forget himself under the infatuation of womanly beauty. Once Sri Ramakrishna compared Naren with a well-known *Bhakta* who often went into spiritual ecstasy and was thus highly respected by us. He said: "That man gets beside himself on meeting women. But Naren never. I watched him carefully. Though he does not say so, I found that he seems rather annoyed when they come. His attitude seems as if he thinks with some disgust: Why are they here?"

It was characteristic of Naren that though *Jñāna* was so strong in him and he was so manly in every respect, still he was very gentle and full of devotion. Sri Ramakrishna often remarked on this, and once he said, looking at Naren's face: "Could one who is only a dry *Jñāni* have such eyes? With *Jñāna*, you have all the tender feelings of the *Bhakta*. You have the strength of a man and the devotion of a woman. Those who have only manly qualities, have not the black circles round their nipples. In

the great hero Arjuna these marks (black spots round the nipples) were not present."

Besides the four methods described above, the Master also tested him in other ways. We shall cite two instances. One day he said to Narendra that he possessed many supernatural powers and would like to transfer them to him. Narendra asked him if they would help him in realising God. When the Master answered in the negative, he sternly refused to have anything to do with them. This reply greatly pleased the Master.

But the other test was severer. The coming of Narendra to Dakshineswar was always hailed by Sri Ramakrishna with intense joy, so much so that sometimes even a distant sight of Narendra would plunge him into *Samādhi*. But a day came when all this changed. Narendra came, saluted and sat before him, but there was no response from the Master. The Master talked with others, but not with him; he even turned his face away from him. The whole day passed in this way. In the evening Narendra saluted him and returned home. Several days after he again went to Dakshineswar. That day also he met with the same reception. The third and the fourth time also it was the same. Thus passed one month. Then one day Sri Ramakrishna called him to his side and said: "Tell me, how is it that though I do not speak a word to you, you still continue to come here?" Narendra replied: "Sir, it is not your words alone that draw me. I love you and want to see you, therefore I come." Sri Ramakrishna was highly pleased with the answer. He said: "I was only testing you. I wanted to see if you would stay away when I did not show you love and attention. Only one of your calibre could put up with so much neglect and indifference. Any one else would have left me long ago, and would never have come again."

# PRACTICE OF RELIGION

BY ANANDA

SIGNS OF THE TRUE GURU

Of course the *Guru* has to be very carefully sought out. Not all can be *Guru*. Neither can all be disciple, *Shishya*. The *Guru* and disciple should possess the necessary qualifications. We are considering here the case of an aspirant who is eager to realise God, who has been convinced of the evanescence of the world, who is not attached to the things of the world, and who is full of *viveka* and *vairāgya*. He is qualified to be a disciple. As regards the *Guru* we must remember that a man of realisation is a very rare thing in the world. Not one in a million has realised the Truth. Besides, even when one has realised God, one does not want to let it be known. He rather wants to keep it a secret. That makes the finding of a capable *Guru* much more difficult. Then again, not all realise God in all aspects. Suppose one has realised God, say, as *Vishnu*. He can be of full help only to a *Vaishnava* aspirant. A worshipper of *Shakti* will have to approach one who has realised God as *Shakti* to be his disciple. That makes the chance still narrower. The fact is, as we said last month, the way to God is beset with all obstacles possible. Only an adamant resolve can overcome them.

It is easy for us, ignorant as we are, to be deceived by pseudo-*Gurus*. And there are indeed plenty of them always about. We have no idea of true spirituality. Some occult powers are enough to delude us. Yet occult powers have nothing to do with spirituality. Any audacious claim by any striking person, or by one advanced by any well-established society, may hook us for any nonsensical creed.—We are so credulous! Many

frauds and suffer greatly. And as a result their life becomes a failure and they lose faith in religion itself. But there are signs by which we can know the right person. If we are sincere, if we seek only God and do not practise religion with any ulterior purpose, we shall instinctively know if the person claiming to be a *Guru* is genuine or not. Our sincerity itself will be our guide. But mere instinct may not be the safest guide. We must employ our reason also. Swami Vivekananda has nicely described the signs and qualifications of a true *Guru* in his *Bhakti Yoga*. We cannot do better than quote from it :

"In the teacher we must first see that he knows the secret of the Scriptures. . . . the teacher must be able to know the *spirit* of the Scriptures. The teacher who deals too much in words, and allows the mind to be carried away by the force of words, loses the spirit. . . . The various methods of joining words, the various methods of speaking in beautiful language, the various methods of explaining the diction of the Scriptures, are only for the disputations and enjoyment of the learned, they do not conduce to the development of spiritual perception. . . . You will find that no one of the great teachers of the world ever went into these various explanations of the texts ; there is with them no attempt at 'text-torturing,' no eternal playing upon the meaning of words and their roots. Yet they nobly taught. . .

"The second condition necessary in the teacher is—sinlessness. The question is often asked, 'Why should we look into the character and personality of a teacher? We have only to judge of what he says, and take that up.'



teach me something of dynamics or chemistry, or any other physical science, he may be anything he likes, because what the physical sciences require, is merely an intellectual equipment; but in the spiritual sciences it is impossible from first to last, that there can be any spiritual light in the soul that is impure. What religion can an impure man teach? The *sine qua non* of acquiring spiritual truth for one's self, or for imparting it to others, is the purity of heart and soul. A vision of God, or a glimpse of the beyond, never comes until the soul is pure. Hence with the teacher of religion we must see first what he is and then what he says. He must be perfectly pure, and then alone comes the value of his words, because he is only then the true 'transmitter.' What can he transmit, if he has not spiritual power in himself? There must be the worthy vibration of spirituality in the mind of the teacher, so that it may be sympathetically conveyed to the mind of the taught. The function of the teacher is indeed an affair of the transference of something, and not one of a mere stimulation of the existing intellectual or other faculties in the taught. Something real and appreciable as an influence comes from the teacher and goes to the taught. Therefore the teacher must be pure.

"The third condition is in regard to the motive. The teacher must not teach with any ulterior selfish motive, for money, name, or fame; his work must be simply out of love, out of pure love for mankind at large. The only medium through which spiritual force can be transmitted, is love. Any selfish motive, such as the desire for gain or for name, will immediately destroy this conveying medium. God is love, and only he who has known God as love, can be a teacher of godliness and God to man.

"When you see that in your teacher these conditions are fulfilled, you are

allow yourself to be taught by him, for there is the great danger that if he cannot convey goodness to your heart, he may convey wickedness. This danger must by all means be guarded against. 'He who is learned in the Scriptures, sinless, and unpolluted by lust, is the greatest knower of *Brahman*.'"

Why is the *Guru* expected to know the secret of the Scriptures? Book-learning and intellectualism have no place in religion, we know. Yet why should he know the Scriptures? The idea is that the teacher must not preach things which are antagonistic to the Scriptures. If he does, we must be suspicious of him. He is not genuine. For the Scriptures are not mere records of intellectual cogitations, but of actual, living experiences. These experiences are true for all times, because they relate to things which are eternal,—soul, God. If someone suddenly claims to have found out something which negatives all those previous experiences, we must mistrust him. Either he is self-deluded or he is a fraud. We must in any case beware of him. He is not a safe guide.

As regards the other conditions, the motive is obvious. He must be pure both as regards *Kāmini* and *Kānchana*, lust and gold, more specially about *Kāmini*. Nowadays there are specious philosophies advocated, lauding sexual intercourse as holy and sacramental. These are all talks of self-deluded fools who consider their present condition as something praiseworthy and have no idea of the true nature of high spiritual realisations and the conditions precedent to them. We must never listen to them. What to speak of sex-action, even the slightest of sexual thought is a great bar to spiritual progress. If, therefore, anyone indulges in any kind of sexuality, however refined, he is quite unfit to be a real *Guru*. He is yet far from the truth.

The would-be disciple must watch

and by night and be perfectly sure that he fulfils the above conditions. Then the disciple must know that he has indeed met a god among men, and he may, and indeed should, surrender himself completely at his feet.

We know such *Gurus* are very rare. But then, are real aspirants *plentiful*? They are also very rare. Most of us are only aspirants in name. We are half-hearted. We do not want God sincerely. And when the yearning for Him will flame up in our heart, we shall have the true *Guru*. The saints of God have assured us that there is this provision in the laws Divine that when we shall want Him seriously, He would send teachers to guide us to His sacred feet. So there need not be any cause for despair. There should be, on the other hand, even greater attempts at making ourselves pure and sincere.

There is an idea prevalent amongst a large section of people that once they have been initiated by a *Guru*, they need not do anything more: the *Guru* himself will now do everything for them and lead them on to God. There is also the other idea that a *Guru* by initiating a disciple takes on himself the entire burden of the disciple's sins. Though no doubt there is some truth behind these ideas, their wide prevalence is due more to our inherent indolence than to the core of truth existing in them. There are teachers and teachers. Not all men of realisation possess the above powers. Only Divine Incarnations and a few of their greatest associate-disciples possess them. They can give instant Illumination to a man and

free him for ever from his sins. But others, however great, cannot do so. The disciple will receive from them power, the spark that will light the fire in him and burn all impurities. But the disciple himself must blow at the fire, and try assiduously to realise the truth and conquer obstacles. No indolence will avail. The sooner we get rid of this complacent philosophy, the better.

The search for the *Guru* must necessarily be a long one. Till then, what shall we do? Let us pray yearningly to God to vouchsafe us His grace in the form of a true *Guru*. And let us grow more and more in the spiritual qualities. Much can be done by the sincere efforts of oneself alone. We may nicely prepare the soil of our heart, so that when we shall meet the *Guru*, he may at once sow the mighty seed of which is to grow the tree of ambrosial fruits.

We have accompanied the reader at last to the sacred feet of the *Guru*. The *Guru* will instruct him on the actual practices which are to lead him to the Holy of the Holies. Now indeed will his actual spiritual practice begin. He has now entered the mansion of the Lord. We can accompany him no further. We do not presume to help him further. We have tried to tell him about the preliminaries of practical religion in accordance with our light. Perchance we have been of some help to some, perchance not. We now bid the reader good-bye, wishing him all prosperity in his voyage towards the peaceful haven of God. *Om Shāntih! Shāntih!! Shāntih!!!*

(CONCLUDED)

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# ASHTAVAKRA SAMHITA

By SWAMI NITYASWARUPANANDA

## CHAPTER XIV

PEACE

जनक उवाच ।

प्रकृत्या शून्यचित्तो यः प्रमादाद्वाचभावनः ।

निद्रितो बोधित इव क्षीणसंसारणो हि सः ॥१॥

जनकः Janaka उवाच said :

यः Who प्रकृत्या by nature शून्यचित्तः empty-minded प्रमादात् through inadvertence भावभावनः thinking of objects निद्रितः asleep बोधितः awake इव as if सः he हि verily क्षीणसंसारणः one whose worldly life is exhausted.

1. He verily has his worldly<sup>1</sup> life exhausted,<sup>2</sup> who is empty-minded<sup>3</sup> by<sup>4</sup> nature, who thinks<sup>5</sup> of objects through inadvertence, and who is as<sup>6</sup> it were awake though asleep.

[<sup>1</sup> *Worldly etc.*—life of the senses implying the pairs of opposites, bondage of *karma* and consequent birth and rebirth.

<sup>2</sup> *Exhausted*—For him worldly life is destroyed for ever. Its forces have no longer any hold on him.

<sup>3</sup> *Empty-minded*—devoid of any desires or *samskāras* and knowledge of objects, but full of the luminous consciousness of the Self alone.

<sup>4</sup> *By etc.*—in reality.

<sup>5</sup> *Thinks etc.*—So long as his body remains, he becomes casually conscious of the phenomenal world, due to the remnants of *karma*, called *prāraudha karma*, which still continue to function. But such consciousness of objects should not be considered as the same as the ordinary man's consciousness of them, it is so superficial and flimsy with the man of realisation. It is only accidental and does not leave any effect behind. Hence, in reality he is empty-minded.

<sup>6</sup> *As etc.*—Sleep generally clouds our consciousness. But the man of realisation is ever full of the knowledge of the Self and it is not obstructed even if he may be physically asleep.]

क धनानि क मित्राणि क मे विषयदस्यवः ।

क शास्त्रं क च विज्ञानं यदा मे गळिता सृष्टा ॥२॥

यदा When मे my सृष्टा desire गळिता dropped down ( तदा then ) मे my क where धनानि riches क where मित्राणि friends क where विषयदस्यवः robbers in the forms of the sense-objects क where शास्त्रं scripture क where विज्ञानं knowledge च and.

2. When my desire<sup>1</sup> has melted away, where are my riches, where my friends and the robbers<sup>2</sup> in the forms of the sense-objects, and where<sup>3</sup> are scripture and knowledge?<sup>4</sup>

[<sup>1</sup> *Desire*—for the objects of enjoyment in this world or the next.

<sup>2</sup> *Robbers etc.*—Because the objects of the senses rob us of the perception of the Self.

<sup>3</sup> *Where etc.*—Scriptural injunctions are only for those who are still in ignorance. They are of no use to a man of Self-realisation.

<sup>4</sup> *Knowledge*—secular as well as scriptural. The one is derived from worldly experience and is therefore of no use to a *Jnani*. And the other is an indirect knowledge of the spiritual realities, but having now directly experiencing them, he does not want it.]

विज्ञाते साक्षिपुरुषे परमात्मनि चेभ्यरे ।

नैराक्ष्ये बन्धमोक्षे च न चिन्ता मुक्तये मम ॥३॥

साक्षिपुरुषे Self who is the witness ईश्वरे Lord च and परमात्मनि the Supreme Self विज्ञाते ( सति ) having been realised बन्धमोक्षे in bondage and liberation च and नैराक्ष्ये desirelessness ( सति being ) मुक्तये for emancipation मम my चिन्ता anxiety न not ( सति is )

3. As I have realised the Supreme Self who is the Witness and the Lord, and have<sup>1</sup> lost all desire for bondage and liberation, I feel no anxiety for emancipation.

[<sup>1</sup> *Have etc.*—because of the realisation of the eternal, ever-free and ever-blissful *Atman*. A man of Self-realisation transcends all consciousness of bondage and freedom. An ignorant man alone requires to shake off bondage and attain emancipation.]

अन्तर्विकल्पशून्यस्य बहिः स्वच्छन्दचारिणः ।

आन्तस्येव दशास्तास्तास्तादृशा एव जानते ॥४॥

अन्तः Within विकल्पशून्यस्य devoid of uncertainty बहिः outside आन्तस्य एव like a deluded one स्वच्छन्दचारिणः moving at his own pleasure ताः ताः such and such दशाः conditions तादृशाः those like him एव surely जानते know.

4. The different conditions of one who is within devoid<sup>1</sup> of doubts but without moves<sup>2</sup> about at his own pleasure like a deluded person, can<sup>3</sup> only be understood by those like him.

[<sup>1</sup> *Devoid, etc.*—He has the perfect Knowledge. He possesses the whole and complete Truth. He is, therefore, free from all doubts and uncertainties.

<sup>2</sup> *Moves etc.*—One who has attained Self-knowledge is no longer bound by man-made laws for the regulation of his conduct which sometimes appears as unbecoming and wrong.

<sup>3</sup> *Can etc.*—A man of realisation alone can understand the ways of another man of realisation. The average man who estimates people by their outward conduct, can never understand the men of Self-knowledge, for their external ways are apparently contradictory to their inner illumination.]

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### In this number

Just as the February issue was devoted pre-eminently to Swami Vivekananda, so the present number is dedicated to Sri Ramakrishna whose auspicious birthday falls this year, as our readers know, on Sunday, the 2nd March. . . . We are privileged to

by SWAMI SHIVANANDA who is one of the prominent direct disciples of the Master and the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. In this article which he originally wrote in reply to inquiries by M. Romain Rolland, he dwells briefly but clearly on his own experience and understanding of his great Master ; and as such

document. We have great pleasure in presenting it to our readers. . . . We, however, draw the readers' attention to the present instalment of *The Diary of a Disciple*, wherein the Swami's reminiscences of his divine Master are recorded in further details. . . . *The River Re-enters the Sea* by Romain Rolland is that great writer's last article on Sri Ramakrishna to be published in *Prabuddha Bharata*. The Master's last days are so beautifully portrayed in this article that we could not resist the temptation of presenting it to our readers. The English translation of M. Rolland's book on Sri Ramakrishna, of which the chapters hitherto published by us form but a part, is already in the press and will be shortly published by the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati. . . . We draw the careful attention of our readers to *Exceptional Children* by K.B. MADHAVA, M.A., A.I.A. (LONDON), in which a subject comparatively unknown in India is tersely treated. Mr. Madhava is a brilliant professor of the Mysore University where he occupies the chair of Statistical Economics. He is an Associate of the Institute of Actuaries, London, and has many thoughtful works to his credit. Scientific determination of individual intelligence and capacities has indeed become urgent in view of the strenuous international competition in all fields as well as for the purpose of developing our latent powers ; and India cannot possibly neglect it. . . . We adapt *How Sri Ramakrishna Tested His Disciples* from the Bengali biography of the great Master by SWAMI SARADANANDA. The Swami was another prominent disciple of the Master and his book on him is undoubtedly a masterpiece. The present article, dealing as it does with a very interesting and important aspect of Sri Ramakrishna's life and activities, will be, we have no doubt, much appreciated by our readers. . . . *Practice of Religion* by ANANDA is concluded in this issue. Most possibly it will be soon brought out in book-form with

### Swami Vivekananda on Western Industrialism, etc.

Here is a third instalment of quotations from the speeches and writings of Swami Vivekananda, bearing on his views on what we can learn from the West and other cognate topics :

"Have we to learn anything else, have we to learn anything from the world? We have, perhaps, to gain a little in material knowledge, in the power of organisation, in the ability to handle powers, organising powers, in bringing the best results out of the smallest of causes. This perhaps to a certain extent we may learn from the West. . . . Yet, perhaps, some sort of materialism, toned down to our own requirements, would be a blessing to many of our brothers who are not yet ripe for the highest truths. This is the one mistake made in every country and in every society, and it is a greatly regrettable thing that in India where it was always understood, the same mistake of forcing the highest truths on to people who are not ready for them, has been made of late. . . . there is a tendency to bind every one down by the same laws as those by which the Sannyâsin is bound, and that is a great mistake. But for that a good deal of the poverty and the misery that you see in India need not have been. A poor man's life is hemmed in and bound down by tremendous spiritual and ethical laws for which he has no use. Hands off ! Let the poor fellow enjoy himself a little, and then he will raise himself up and renunciation will come to him of itself. Perhaps in this line, we can be taught something by the Western people, but we must be very cautious in learning these things. (*Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. III, pp. 149-151).

"As Western ideas of organisation and external civilisation are penetrating and pouring into our country, whether we will have them or not, so Indian

ing the lands of the West. None can resist it, no more can we resist some sort of material civilisation from the West. A little of it, perhaps, is good for us, and a little spiritualisation is good for the West; thus the balance will be preserved." (C. W., Vol. III, p. 171).

"This is the teaching on the practical side. Believe, therefore, in yourselves, and if you want material wealth, work it out; it will come to you. If you want to be intellectual, work it out on the intellectual plane, and intellectual giants you shall be. And if you want to attain freedom, work it out on the spiritual plane, and free you shall be, and shall enter into Nirvâna the blissful. But one defect which lay in the Advaita was its being worked out so long on the spiritual plane only, and nowhere else; now the time has come when you have to make it practical; . . . it must come down to the daily, every-day life of the people. . . . Let us bring it down from heaven unto the earth; this is the present dispensation. . . .

"Aye, you may be astonished to hear that as practical Vedantists the Americans are better than we are. . . ." (C. W., Vol. III, p. 427).

"What we want is not much spirituality, as a little of the bringing down of the Advaita into the material world." (C. W., Vol. III, pp. 431-432).

"Machinery in a small proportion is good, but too much of it kills man's initiative and makes a lifeless machine of him. The men in factories are doing the same monotonous work, day after day, night after night, year after year, each batch of men doing one special bit of work—such as fashioning the heads of pins, or uniting the ends of threads, or moving backwards and forwards with the loom—for a whole life. And the result is, that the loss of that special job means death to them—they find no other means of living

a machine, one becomes a lifeless machine. For that reason, one serving as a school-master or a clerk for a whole life-time, ends by turning a stupendous fool." (C. W., Vol. VII, p. 299).

### **Renunciation the Basis of Spiritualisation**

In course of our note last month on the Conflict of the Divine and the Human we remarked that human love is rather an impediment to spiritual progress than a help, and that the desire to enjoy God through the love of father, mother, wife, children, etc. was a delusion. This has raised the questions: What about spiritualisation? Have we not time and again said that family life can be spiritualised? And is not that a strong point of Hindu spirituality? How then do we reconcile these two ideas? These questions have certainly some point. But we must say that the statements are not at all contradictory. Last month we only detailed the process by which spiritualisation is possible. We say that spiritualisation is not possible by indulging in the felicities of domestic relations. The joys that we have through our normal relationships with men and women, especially our relatives and friends, have certainly to be foregone. We must make a distinction: it is one thing to conceive one's dear ones as God and love and serve them as such, and quite another thing to continue our *natural* relations and simply name them as spiritual. Mere giving a different name makes little difference. Some inward change is essential.

How can that change be brought about? How can we truly spiritualise our human relationships? We must possess a strong power of discrimination to accomplish this. We must every moment distinguish between the eternal and the ephemeral in our beloved ones. And we must more and more relate ourselves to the eternal and withdraw ourselves from the

shall find that the joys of natural relationships do not affect us any more. A complete change of outlook has ensued. The love that will then grow will be real love,—spiritual and not secular as it is now. In fact, that love will be the love of the devotee for the Lord, and nothing else. One then never feels that one has more of the joy of Divine communion because it percolates through the forms of human love. On the other hand, this interposition of human forms appears irksome, and one is impatient to do away with them. The spiritualisation of human relations is the beginning and an aid to spiritual illumination, and not the perfection and enhancement of it. The vision which sees the Divine as interpenetrating *all*, is not to be identified with this spiritualisation. It is the result of a very high state of spiritual perfection. We first try to conceive some as Divine: this is the spiritualisation of family relationship. This develops spiritual consciousness. Then comes complete renunciation of the world. In that stage everything smacking of the world seems dreadful and one feels one's secular relationships as so many deep dark wells into which one may any moment fall. One wants God and God alone. When one has realised Him or approached Him very near, one finds the entire universe as penetrated by the Divine Himself,—one finds that God and the world are the same. In that state man and God become one and then to love men is to love God Himself. But only a few can realise that state. For others to say that by loving their dear ones they are loving God, is sheer hypocrisy. The fact is, without complete renunciation God can *never* be realised whether in the world or outside it.

### Psychological Tests

Elsewhere we publish an article on *Exceptional Children* by Prof. Mad-

readers, we are sure, will properly appreciate the subject-matter of the article. There are two ways in which an individual can fulfil his life, at least his relative life: (1) by spiritualising himself, by being non-attached to all his activities, mental and physical, and eventually realising himself as spirit; and (2) by perfecting and fully developing his mental powers and faculties. Both these, in our opinion, are essential to the healthy growth and prosperity of our collective life. If we merely preach *Karma Yoga*, non-attachment, without at the same time emphasising the need of developing one's powers, we run the risk of stunting the manifestation of life with all its attendant evil consequences. In the present age specially, the latter aspect requires to be specially attended to. In all parts of the world, strenuous efforts are being made to make the utmost use of the human material. No powers are allowed to be wasted. It has become, therefore, urgently necessary that an individual's tendencies and latent powers should be gauged betimes and the man trained up and employed accordingly. A misfit is a waste not only unto itself, but also to the nation. But how to find out the tendencies and latent powers of a boy or girl? Prof. Madhava's article will give us an idea.

In our country also, some such test was considered necessary. Our readers may be aware how astrologers calculate and discover the intrinsic caste of a new-born babe. The baby may be born in any caste. But it itself has a caste of its own,—*Brāhmaṇa*, *Kshatriya*, *Vaiśya* or *Shudra*. This is supposed to indicate the latent *Samskāras* of the child. It has been said that the caste of a man is determined by his latent tendencies and powers and his occupation. The intrinsic caste of a child indicates its latent powers and its fitting occupation. Obviously this method of deter-

of little use at the present time. But what we should note here is that the need of psychological determination has been felt all along in India. New means should be adopted now, that is all.

Like every other thing, the modern means of psychological tests also has been often abused. There may be genuine and spurious tests. Suppose we want to test the intelligence of a group of boys. What tests shall we apply? Professor X has devised a set of tests which he considers perfect. Suppose we employ the tests and find that 50 per cent of the boys are intelligent. Professor Y, however, has got another set of tests, by applying which we find only 20 per cent intelligent. Now which tests are true? This is only one of the many difficulties of the present means of determining human powers and tendencies.

In fact, no tests can ever be considered final and complete. Besides, the human material is an illusive thing. It is impossible to always correctly determine its future. But allowing for all these deficiencies, it must be admitted that there is much truth behind these tests and that they are for practical purposes often useful. As Mr. N. S. Subba Rao, M. A. (Cantab.) said in his presidential address at the Indian Economic Conference recently held at Allahabad:

"If the human capital of the country is to be most effectively employed, it is necessary to determine what qualities are required by each separate occupation and how the possession of these qualities can most accurately be determined in the child. Otherwise, there will be social waste in a number of ways. Children may be given training leading to occupations for which they may have neither the ability nor the aptitude. When they actually enter the occupation for which they have received the preliminary training, misfits will naturally occur and there will be wastage either

work or a high rate of labour turnover. Nor is this all. There are numerous other evil consequences of misfits of which a long and uncomfortable list is given: neurotic disorders, delinquency, bad temper, malingering, creation of industrial discontent. It is, therefore, necessary that any scheme of vocational education should be supplemented by measures to study the different aptitudes of children, and direct them to courses of study appropriate for the occupations towards which their abilities and aptitude point.

"Vocational tests are destined to play a prominent part in the social organization of the future. Already in parts of Germany, they are in active operation; in Hamburg four-fifths of all the children leaving the school pass through the Vocational Advice Bureau, including children of all social classes, and a large number of these are given psychological tests to assist in the decision with regard to the occupation to be followed in after-life. It is a matter for satisfaction, therefore, that the last Indian Universities' Conference passed a resolution in favour of experiments in the application of psychological tests in the Universities and it is to be hoped that the recommendation will be taken up actively, as the economic and social value of these tests cannot be exaggerated."

### Smelling by Ear and Testing by Eye

We are indebted for the following to a recent issue of *The Literary Digest*.

That curious mixture of the senses called by physiologists "synesthesia" is responsible for the fact that certain persons can receive a brain-message corresponding to one sense when another sense is stimulated. The most common case is that of "color-hearing" where certain sounds produce the sensation of colors; but a writer in *The American Weekly* (New York)



a smell provokes the sensation of sound, where a color produces taste, and so on. Several theories are advanced to explain this curious effect, and the author prefers that which accounts for it by supposing some sort of a "short-circuit" between different brain-centres, so that the sensation that ought to affect the centre of vision stimulates instead that of sound, for instance. We read :

"A radio listener in Paris recently presented French radio engineers with a puzzling problem. When he listened to the church service broadcast from the Cathedral of Notre Dame, this listener said, he also smelled the smoke of the candles in the church. Was it possible, he asked, that smell sensations might be picked up accidentally by the microphone?

"Radio engineers thought not, but were undecided about the real explanation. Certainly nothing of the character of a smell can possibly be sent out, everybody agreed, over radio waves.

"Fortunately for the candle-smelling Parisian, psychologists came to his rescue. He was the victim of a curious mental abnormality called 'Synesthesia' or the mixing of sensations. These instances are most likely to occur in people above the average in mental powers, education, and culture.

"In the Parisian case the listener got his hearing sensations mixed in his brain as they came in. Some of the nerve impulses leaked across the brain to affect the centre for smells. That the listener seemed to smell burning candles is explained by past association.

"In the records of laboratories of psychology are accounts of individuals whose taste sensation got mixed with sounds or with sensations of color; of individuals whose smell sensations called up colors or senses; of still other persons whom sounds made to feel pain or whom pain made to hear

imaginary sounds. Apparently nearly every possible mixture of one sense with the other has been detected in at least one abnormal individual.

"Some such mixtures are familiar. Taste sensations, for example, are not infrequently produced by the sight of food. The fact that the body feels the taste impulses unconsciously is indicated by the common observation that sight of food often 'makes one's mouth water.'

"Another instance is the fact, well-known to musicians, that sight of objects possessing strong taste may interfere with the position of the mouth muscles. A cornet player, for example, may be broken up completely in a solo on his instrument if he chances to see a person in the audience sucking a lemon. The automatic reaction to the acid lemon juice produced by mere sight of the fruit draws the cornetist's mouth into a shape which makes production of a good tone all but impossible.

"By far the commonest of these abnormalities are color sensations called into being by ideas of other kinds. 'Color-hearing' is one of the commonest cases; a condition in which the hearing of some sound always calls up in a person's mind the sensation of a definite color."

There can be no doubt, we are assured, that these color experiences on hearing sounds are perfectly real to the persons who experience them. Not long ago in Germany, a Dr. Anscutz, musician and psychologist, broadcast by radio an appeal for persons possessing these powers to present themselves for psychological study. One hundred and fifty individuals came forward, which must indicate that an immensely larger number of such persons exist. The writer goes on :

"Dr. Ponder, Dr. D. F. Fraser-Harris, of London, and other experts located many other cases. Something like 12 per cent of the average population possesses, Dr. Ponder believes, traces

of this color-hearing power. It belongs, he suspects, to an actual majority of young children, although it often fades as a child grows up.

"Dr. Ponder has several acquaintances, he reports, who see colors and color combinations when they hear the horns of taxi-cabs or other automobiles on the street; usually a different color for each horn. Accordingly, these persons amuse themselves when walking on the street by 'looking' at the colors of the horn blasts and other street sounds entering their ears. Two other color hearers are recorded as quarrelling bitterly about the precise

color of the sound of knives and forks being rattled in a restaurant kitchen.

"In a smaller number of individuals, several of whom have been studied by Dr. Fraser-Harris, the sound is not necessary to call up the color. A mere idea is enough. Dr. Fraser-Harris calls these individuals 'color thinkers,' and describes one who thought of Sunday as yellow, Wednesday as brown, and Friday as black.

"As an example of mixture of taste sensations with others, Hibbert records the case of a lady to whom milk tasted yellow, sweets tasted blue, and all unpleasant tastes were brown."

## REVIEW

THE STORY OF MY EXPERIMENTS WITH TRUTH, VOL. II. By M. K. Gandhi. *The Navajivan Press, Ahmedabad.* 608 pp. Price Rs. 5-8-0.

Many biographers of greatmen make the mistake of painting their virtues in such glowing colours that they altogether hide their weaknesses. And thus one great purpose of biography is defeated—it fails to inspire the readers to emulate the good qualities of those greatmen. Mahatma Gandhi will escape such tragedy by reason of the fact that he has laid bare his strength and weakness unsparingly and unhesitatingly in his autobiography.

The early life of Gandhiji had not much to distinguish it from that of any average youth. But when noble purposes dawned upon his mind, he began to strive with what ordinary resources, moral and spiritual, he had, and after years of persistent struggle he has achieved so much success that he is now universally acclaimed as indeed a saint. The success of Mahatma Gandhi is not due to any magic power or sudden grace of God, which many less earnest persons will like to wait for, but has been earned by slow labour from day to day. As to the method of work, he has always looked to the Small Voice within, and made the whispers of his soul audible in action. As such, his life has been a series of experimentation, and in that he had very often to go against established beliefs and opinions: he had occasionally

and cast aside the earnest pleadings of sincere friends. Many of the conclusions arrived at by Gandhiji through his *experiments* may not coincide with the experiences of others; but the rigidity with which he could stick to his purpose will be an object-lesson to all idealists, to all who want to live the life to a purpose and not wallow in the mire of sense-enjoyment.

Many of those who are busy only with the political opinions of the Mahatma could not have access to his inner life but for this autobiography. "What I want to achieve,—what I have been striving and pining to achieve these thirty years," says Gandhiji, "is self-realisation, to see God face to face, to attain Moksha. I live and move and have my being in pursuit of this goal. All that I do by way of speaking and writing, all my ventures in political field, are directed to this same end." This is the reason why each of his actions is actuated by a supreme idealism, sometimes seemingly absurd. But he can keep his vision undisturbed under all circumstances, whether engaged in political struggles, or busy with economic problems or social reforms and sundry other things. This is a distinct contribution by the Mahatma to the modern world. And his autobiography, being the history of the growth of his inner life, will be read with reverence as long as noble ideas do not fail to inspire human beings. The first

time back and the present volume completes the narration describing events till the Nagpur Congress. The get-up of the book has been consistent with its inner excellence.

**RAMDAS AND RAMDASIS.** By Wilber S. Deming, Ph.D. Association Press (Y.M. C.A.), 5, Russel Street, Calcutta, pp. 223.

The present volume is one in 'The Religious Life of India' series, edited by a group of Christian Missionaries, their purpose being to make a critical study of all the living forces of religion in India. In bringing out the salient features of Indian religious life, the religion described is brought into relation with Christianity. The ulterior motive appears to be to show the superiority of Christianity over others, and as such it is a new method of preaching among the intellectual classes.

We, Indians, look upon Christianity as a fine religion, giving shelter to millions; but when it claims to be the best of religions and exposes every other idea and practice making it the absolute standard of truth, we beg to differ. We welcome a comparative study of religions, but such a study is not possible with people who are already prejudiced by a number of fixed ideas and who have no imagination to look beyond.

The first ten chapters of this book were originally prepared as a thesis for the Ph.D. degree and submitted to the Faculty of the Kennedy School of Missions in the Hartford Seminary Foundation. These chapters have been written with a spirit of research, and the author has laboured hard to go through many contemporary works and letters of Ramdas and his disciples. Reference has also been made to many standard authors like Ranade, Sircar, Kincaid, Keluskar, etc.

The life-story of Ramdas has been told after weighing every doubtful fact and consulting every possible source, though the decision arrived at may not be always true. The author has evinced his love of history by a laborious sifting of facts, but his interpretation has been misleading in many cases, for he could not understand the Hindu point of view.

The author has told us how Ramdas passed his boyhood, renounced the world, wandered from place to place, made disciples, established a new movement, composed

forth the ethical teachings and the theological views of the Swami, and has assigned his place in history by pointing out his social, political, religious and literary influences. "Ramdas and Sivaji" is an interesting study, but the narrative has lost its flow and force by being sceptical and halting at places. The book presents a series of disjointed facts, rather than a growth of a single life. The style is simple and commonplace.

In the last chapter Ramdas and Jesus have been compared. They have, no doubt, some points of similarity, but the message of Ramdas is limited to a particular place and time, while "the message of Jesus derives part of its uniqueness from its timelessness and universality, for it is as applicable to the twentieth century as to the first, to the West as well as to the East." Such is the author's conclusion.

The metaphysical position of Ramdas deserves special consideration. He is a *Vedāntist* and a *Bhakta*. Study of *Dāsabodh* and other poems of the Swami reveals that he seeks to teach that there is only one reality, namely, Brahman, and at the same time he emphasizes the worship of Rama. Rama is the loving God who saves his humble worshipper from the miseries of life, and only by knowledge can the truth be known that the human soul is the Supreme Soul.

These apparently contradictory notions concerning 'Monism and Dualism, *Jñāna* and *Bhakti*, self-effort and self-dedication, have created great confusion in Mr. Deming who finds no way out of it. So the life and teachings of Ramdas do not stand his logical test, and consequently do not rise so high as those of Jesus. To a Hindu, Christ is great, because he has struck the note of Dualism as successfully as that of Monism. Ramdas, as a Hindu genius, represents the cultural unity of his race that is based on the reality of life and not on logic merely. Reality is one and undivided, but it appears to be divided under the shadow of egoism which differentiates the Individual from the Universal and begets miseries. So long as I exist, He exists. When I disappear, He is realised as One Eternal Substance. In the process of spiritual unfolding all these phases are experienced at different stages,—they never conflict, rather one leads to the other.

We are sorry to observe that one who

not view life as a whole, can hardly do justice to Ramdas or Jesus or any other great soul.

The book can be recommended to a lover of History, but not to a seeker after spiritual knowledge.

**GLIMPSSES OF LIGHT.** By *Swami Dhyanananda. Yogada Sat-Sanga, Los Angeles, California, U.S.A. 146 pp. Price not mentioned.*

The book contains some of the addresses the author delivered in the U.S.A. during the last three and a half years. Although the addresses are brief, they are marked by simplicity. The author has tried to reconcile the Oriental and Occidental ways of expressing truth from a broad and ra-

tional view-point. Christianity and Hinduism have been explained by the author from a liberal and universal standpoint. The author is of opinion that superstition and provincialism in religion have marred the progress of humanity in the East as well as in the West. Science, he says, has given a death-blow to all superstitions at the present age.

The intention of the author in publishing this book is to stimulate a casual reader to a deeper study of philosophy and religion. There is a tinge of mysticism in his speeches. The book under review will help the Westerner to have a sympathetic attitude towards the East. The printing and get-up of the book are excellent.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### A Prospective Sevashrama at Hrikhikesh

Hrikhikesh, 15 miles from Kankhal, is a favourite resort for *Sādhus* for practising *tapasyā*. From all parts of India *Sādhus* and pilgrims visit this place. These *Sādhus* and pilgrims, when attacked by disease, have none to care for them and serve them. Their plight under such conditions is sad indeed. This the leading *Sādhus* of Hrikhikesh have been noticing for a long time. Recently they appealed to the President of the Ramakrishna Mission to open a Sevashrama there. The President of the Mission was kind enough to sanction the appeal. He has asked the Kankhal R. K. Mission Sevashrama to start a Branch Centre at Hrikhikesh.

Funds are necessary to begin the work, to buy land and construct buildings thereon for dispensary and hospital work. The need is urgent. A sum of Rs. 30,000/- is required for the following : to purchase a land, and to build the outdoor and indoor dispensary, workers' quarters, a kitchen and a well. Those who wish to perpetuate the loving memory of their dear departed, may do so by erecting any of the buildings in their name. Already a lady of Rangpur has contributed a sum of Rs. 2,000/-, for the construction of the well. A gentleman of Rangoon has also promised to build a ward consisting of 2 beds in memory of his daughter, for which he has donated the sum of Rs. 1,200/-. We earnestly hope the public will respond liberally and quickly to

these urgent needs. All contributions may be sent to the *Hon. Secretary, R. K. Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal P.O., Shaharanpur Dt., U.P.*

### Sri Ramakrishna Mission Student's Home, Madras

The management of the Home beg to place before the public their report on the working of the institution for 1929. During the year the Staff-Quarters were completed and were opened in May last. The number of students on the roll was 142. The examination results of the institution were praiseworthy and satisfactory. The boys of the Home do a great portion of the household work. This naturally promotes a sense of the dignity of labour, which the present-day students lack. Fifteen boys or so are under the charge of a teacher. The Warden who is a monk of the Ramakrishna Order, supervises the whole work of the institution and is responsible for imparting religious instruction to the students. In the mornings and evenings religious classes are held and the Ramayana and Mahabharata as well as the lives and teachings of Saints are read to the younger boys. The elder students are taught the Gita. Every kind of facility is given to the boys to practise *Sandhyā*-meditation and to follow the teachings of religion in actual life. Music classes are also held in the Home. Students attend the physical training classes thrice a week. They also play football, cricket and some indigenous games. The general health of

the students during the year was satisfactory. The Magazine started in 1928 is being conducted efficiently. Through this medium the old students, friends and sympathisers of the Home are informed regularly of the progress made by the Home. The library of the Home is of great help to the students. During the year 1,254 books were presented to the library, making the total 8,000.

The Residential High School and the Industrial School have made rapid progress. We would like to mention that the Industrial Section of the Home sent many models of their work to the Exhibition held in the Y.M.C.A. building in August last, and certificates of excellence were awarded to almost all the students. The authorities have felt the necessity to extend the Industrial Section. Proposals for the extension of the workshop by the acquisition of about 12 grounds of land on the northern side of the existing workshop, have been approved by the Government, and it is hoped that the programme will be completed before the middle of 1930. The total estimated cost of the building scheme is Rs. 35,200/-, and additional machinery, etc., will cost about Rs. 47,000/-. The authorities appealed for funds in August last. We are glad that in response to it, a sum of Rs. 14,493-10-9 was received during the year. We earnestly hope that further response to the appeal will be soon made.

The total receipts on all heads amounted to Rs. 47,308-4-4 and the expenditure to Rs. 49,070-4-4 resulting in a deficit of Rs. 1,762/-.

In conclusion the management brings to the notice of the public that the ensuing Silver Jubilee of the Home falls in February, 1930. The Silver Jubilee must see a vista of more active and intensive work open before the Home. What the country needs to-day is improved industrial education. This is the crying need of the day. The management sincerely hope that the Industrial Section when completed will

prove a worthy memorial of the Silver Jubilee. We hope the generous public will continue their hearty support and make the projected scheme an accomplished fact ere long. All contributions to be sent to the *Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Mylapore, Madras.*

**R. K. Mission Sevashrama,  
Kankhal**

The report for the year 1928 shows a good record of service done to suffering people of the locality and especially to pilgrims and *Sādhus*. The number of persons who obtained relief during the year came to 18,273 of whom 791 and 17,482 were indoor and outdoor patients respectively. Besides giving medical aid 114 patients were also supplied with diet and necessary clothing. The Sevashrama has been conducting a free elementary night school having 34 boys of the local depressed classes on the rolls. For teaching the vernaculars the Sevashrama has engaged a paid teacher. There is also a Library in the Sevashrama for the benefit of the workers and the students of the place.

The present needs of the Ashrama are:-- (1) Workers' Quarters, (2) Guest House or *Dharamsālā*, (3) Rest House for Friends and Relatives of Pilgrim-patients, (4) Permanent Endowment Fund, (5) General Maintenance, and (6) A Temple for Worship. We are glad to inform the public that a few kind-hearted ladies and gentlemen have donated something for the above-mentioned items. Still there is much to be done. At present there is a great national awakening in the country. We hope the generous public will come forward with their liberal support to enable the institution to cope with the increasing demands on its service. All contributions, however small, towards any of the departments of the Sevashrama as stated above, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by *Hon. Secretary, R. K. Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal P.O., Shaharanpur Dt., U.P.*

# Prabuddha Bharata

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

## DISCOURSES ON JNANA YOGA

By SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

All men, so-called, are not yet really human beings. Every one has to judge of this world through his own mind. The higher understanding is extremely difficult. The concrete is more to most people than the abstract. As an illustration of this, a story is told of two men in Bombay. They were a Hindu and a Jain, and were playing chess in the house of a rich merchant of Bombay. The house was near the sea, the game long; the ebb and flow of the tide under the balcony where they sat attracted the attention of the players. One explained it by a legend that the gods in their play threw the water into a great pit and then threw it out again. The other said : “No, the gods draw it up to the top of a high mountain to use it, and then when they have done with it, they throw it down again.” A young student present began to laugh at them and said : “Do you not know that the attraction of the moon causes the tides?” At this, both men turned on him in a fury and enquired if he thought they were fools. Did he suppose that they believed the moon had any ropes to pull up the tides, or that it could reach so

far? They utterly refused to accept any such foolish explanation. At this juncture the host entered the room and was appealed to by both parties. He was an educated man and of course knew the truth, but seeing plainly the impossibility of making it understood by the chess-players, he made a sign to the student and then proceeded to give an explanation of the tides that proved eminently satisfactory to his ignorant hearers. “You must know,” he told them, “that afar off in the middle of the ocean, there is a huge mountain of sponge,—you have both seen sponge, and know what I mean. This mountain of sponge absorbs a great deal of the water and then the sea falls; by and by the gods come down and dance on the mountain and their weight squeezes all the water out and the sea rises again. This, gentlemen, is the cause of the tides, and you can easily see for yourselves how reasonable and simple is this explanation.” The two men who ridiculed the power of the moon to cause the tides, found nothing incredible in a mountain of sponge, danced upon by the gods! The gods were real to them, and

they had actually seen sponge; what more likely than their joint effect upon the sea!

"Comfort" is no test of truth, on the contrary truth is often far from "comfortable". If one intends to really find truth, he must not cling to comfort. It is hard to let all go, but the Jñāni *must* do it. He must become pure, kill out all desires and cease to identify himself with the body. Then and then only, the higher truth can shine in his soul. Sacrifice is necessary, and this immolation of the lower self is the underlying truth that has made sacrifice a part of all religions. All the propitiatory offerings to the gods were but dimly understood types of the only sacrifice that is of any real value, the surrender of the apparent self, through which alone can we realize the higher self, the Atman. The Jñāni must not try to preserve the body, nor even wish to do so. He must be strong and follow truth, though the universe fall. Those who follow "fads", can never do this. It is a life-work, nay, the work of a hundred lives! Only the few dare to realize the God within, to renounce heaven, and personal God and all hope of reward. A firm will is needed to do this, to be even vacillating is a sign of tremendous weakness. Man always is perfect, or he never could become so, but he has to realize it. If man were bound by external causes he could only be mortal. Immortality can only be true of the unconditioned. Nothing can act on the Atman,—the idea is pure delusion, but man must identify himself with That, not with body or mind. Let him know that he is the witness of the universe, then he can enjoy the beauty of the wonderful panorama passing before him. Let him even tell himself: "I am the universe, I am Brahman." When man *really* identifies himself with the One, the Atman, everything is possible to him and all matter becomes his servant. As Sri Ramakrishna said: "After the butter is come, it can be put in water or milk and will never mix with either; so when man has

once realized the Self, he can no more be contaminated by the world."

"From a balloon, no minor distinctions are visible, so when man rises high enough, he will not see good and evil people." "Once the pot is burned, no more can it be shaped; so with the mind that has once touched the Lord and had a baptism of fire,—no more can it be changed." Philosophy in Sanskrit means "clear vision," and religion is practical philosophy. Mere theoretic, speculative philosophy is not much regarded in India. There is no church, no creed, no dogma. The two great divisions are the "Dvaitists," and the "Advaitists." The former say: "The way of salvation is through the mercy of God; the law of causation once set in motion, can never be broken; only God who is not bound by this law, by His mercy helps us to break it." The latter say: "Behind all this nature is something that is free, and finding that which is beyond all law, finds us freedom, and freedom is salvation." Dualism is only one phase, Advaitism goes to the ultimate. To become pure, is the shortest path to freedom. Only that is ours, which we earn. No authority can save us, no beliefs. If there is a God, *all* can find Him. No one needs to be told it is warm; each one can discover it for himself. So it should be with God. He should be a fact in the consciousness of all men. The Hindus do not recognize "sin," as it is understood by the Western mind. Evil deeds are not "sins", we are not offending some Ruler in committing such, we are simply injuring ourselves and we must suffer the penalty. It is not a sin to put one's finger in the fire, but he who does so will surely suffer just as much as if it were. All deeds produce certain results, and "every deed returns to the doer." "Trinitarianism" is an advance on "Unitarianism" (which is dualism, God and man forever separate). The first step upwards is when we recognise ourselves as the children of God; the last step is when we realize ourselves as the One, the Atman.

# THE SAMGHA\*

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Mutual love, obedience to the authorities, forbearance and absolute purity are the only means of maintaining unity among the brothers. Obedience is the greatest aid to achievement. Therefore, one must carry out orders even at the risk of one's life.

Continuance of policy through generations is the only means of noble achievements and greater and greater accumulation of power. Therefore, a Head of the Order should follow and continue the policy of work which has been inaugurated by his predecessor.

Organisation is the primary means of all progress and the only way to the conservation of energy. Therefore, the curse of the entire Organisation (Samgha) shall fall on the head of one who would seek to bring about its disruption and disintegration, by word, thought and action, and ruin shall seize him in this world and the next.

Whoever being guilty will deny it and seek to fight with the Organisation, shall also be ruined in this world and the next.

For this Organisation is the body of Sri Ramakrishna and in this Organisation He is ever present. The injunction of the united Organisation is the injunction of Sri Ramakrishna. One who worships it, worships Him. One who disregards it, disregards Him.

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## CHILD-MARRIAGE : AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Your letter only made me sad. I see you have lost all enthusiasm. I know all of you, your powers and your limitations. I would not have called you to any task which you are incompetent to do. The only task I would have given you was to teach Elementary Sanskrit, and with the help of dictionaries and other things assist S. in his translations and teachings. I would have moulded you to it. Any one could have done as well—only a little smattering of Sanskrit was absolutely necessary. Well, everything is for the best. If it is the Lord's work the right man for the right

place will be forthcoming in the right time. None of you need feel disturbed. As for X, I don't care who takes money or not, but I have a strong hatred for child-marriage. I have suffered terribly from it and it is *the great sin* for which our nation has to suffer. As such I would hate myself if I help such a diabolical custom directly or indirectly. I wrote to you pretty plain about it and X had no right to play a hoax upon me about his "law-suit" and his attempts to become free. I am sorry for his playing tricks on me who have never done him any harm. This is the world.

\*See "Organisation" in Notes and Comments.



What good you do goes for nothing, but if you stop doing it, then, Lord help you, you are counted as a rogue. Isn't it? Emotional natures like mine are always preyed upon by relatives and friends. This world is merciless. This world is our friend when we are its slaves and no more. This world is broad enough for me. There will always be a corner found for me somewhere. If the people of India do not like me, there will be others who will like. I *must set my foot* to the best of my ability upon this devilish custom of *child-marriage*. No blame will entail on you. You keep at a safe distance, if you are afraid. I am sorry, very sorry, I cannot have any partnership with such doings as *getting husbands for babies*. Lord help me, I never had and never will have. Think of the case of Y! Did you ever meet a more cowardly or brutal one than that? I can kill the man who gets a husband for a baby. The upshot of the whole thing is—I want bold, daring, adventurous spirits to help me. Else I will work alone. I have a mission to fulfil. I will work it out alone. I do not care who comes or who goes. X is already

done for by *Samsāra*. Beware, boy! That was all the advice I thought it my duty to give you. Of course you are great folks now,—my words will have no value with you. But I hope the time will come when you will see clearer, know better and think other thoughts than you are now doing.

Good-bye! I would not bother you any more, and all blessings go with you all. I am very glad I have been of some service to you sometimes if you think so. At least I am pleased with myself for having tried my best to discharge the duties laid on me by my Guru, and well done or ill, I am glad that I tried. So good-bye. Tell X that I am not at all angry with him, but I am sorry, very sorry. It is not the money—that counts nothing—but the violation of a principle that pained me, and the trick he played on me. Good-bye to him also, and to you all. One chapter is closed of my life. Let others come in their due order. They will find me ready. You need not disturb yourselves at all about me. I want no help from any human being in any country. So good-bye! May the Lord bless you all for ever and ever!

## CONFUSION OF VALUES

By THE EDITOR

I

Things are getting more complex every day,—we mean in India. Not that they are becoming simple in the other parts of the world. Not at all. But for the present we are not concerned with the world, but with India. The complexity does not consist in the keen struggle that has commenced in various departments of our life, but in the confusion of ideas and ideals that is manifest everywhere. "Struggle is God's gift," said Swami Vivekananda. For the power that we generate in making our onward path through adamant barriers, is the power that

also makes us great in positive achievements in the days of victory and prosperity. But when struggle is blind, when the ideals are lost sight of, and all sorts of ideas run riot in our brains, energies are largely wasted, we gain little, and we only exhaust ourselves. The goal must ever remain clear in our mind,—even in the darkest hours. The fundamentals must never be forgotten. Then struggle, instead of exhausting energy, rather multiplies it. New dominions of the soul open before us, and even our temporary defeats become as fruitful as victory.

Where is the confusion, do you ask? If we take a detached vision of the

present conditions of India, we shall have no doubt left in our mind about it. No doubt all is not lost. There is undoubtedly a growing substratum of national self-realisation. But we may easily hamper its growth and even spoil what has already been attained. The first thing needed is that the nation must feel as one. Not in any artificial manner, but spontaneously. Perhaps it will be said that the nation is one in political aspirations. Though we have our doubts about this unity, still we must remember that politics cannot call forth the best energies of the Indian nation. Even unity in this respect, therefore, means no unity. That alone will save and ennoble us, which can fill our soul with a heavenly glow and harness all our powers and enthusiasm to its complete realisation and enjoyment. Politics cannot do so. We think that the quest which can at once unite the scattered forces of our being, has not been yet held forth before the nation. That is the reason why at every step there is obstruction. Our own limited vision is largely responsible for it. There is an angle of vision from which the national being appears as an integral whole showing no signs of schisms or factions. That vision has to be proclaimed to and impressed on the national mind. That done, half of the work will have been done.

See in how many different ways we are divided to-day. First of all there is the major quarrel between the Hindus and Muhammadans. Then there is the Brahmin Non-Brahmin quarrel in the Hindu society itself. Thirdly, there is the antagonism between capital and labour. Fourthly, the revolt of youth against the elders. Fifthly, the conflict between the old and the new,—there is a growing section denying the validity of the age-long spiritual ideals of India. Sixthly, the freedom movement of our women. Seventhly, the social reform movement with its attacks on the social system. Eighthly, the struggle of India against foreign domination. Ninthly, the conflict between economic ideals,—

between the cottage-industry ideal and modern industrialism. Tenthly, the conflict of the East and the West, between spirituality and secularism. Our catalogue is not at all exhaustive. We have only noted the significant and prominent aspects. Not all of them, of course, are causing confusion. Some of them are quite clear in their import and in their claim on our duty. But others are bound to befog our intelligence and lead us astray unless we are extremely cautious. As for example, the Hindu-Moslem quarrel. The greatest cause of it is mutual distrust. Did it always exist? Not certainly to the present extent. We believe that the present measure of distrust has been generated by a mishandling of the situation. There were certainly causes for grievance. Hindus did not behave properly with the Muhammadans. They gave them no proper place in their society. They practically ostracised them. They made too much of the differences of forms. Muhammadans, on the other hand, have been extremely aggressive on the Hindu religious and social ideals. They did not try to understand them. The masses of them have been comparatively uncultured, and as a result have been often unscrupulous in their action. They lack refinement, many of them. They are always thinking of other persons and lands than India. Many of them, therefore, lack nationalistic outlook. These are and were no doubt some of the difficulties in the way of Hindu-Moslem union. But slowly India was casting her spell on them. There was a gradual infiltration of each other by their better thoughts. And if the process were allowed to continue unhampered, we have no doubt that these two great communities would have rapidly united. But the politicians interfered. They with their accustomed short-sightedness overlooked the deeper unifying forces, and pounced upon the points of difference and exaggerated them, till the whole masses have been aflame with hatred and mistrust. The fact is, it is

always our way of looking at things that makes all the difference. The differences were there. But there were also the unifying forces. And above all, we might remember that it is not what you or I think and do, that is the most important thing about us. There is a transcendent element in all our thoughts and actions, of which we may be unaware. We Hindus and Muhammadans may think and act from a partisan viewpoint. But overlapping these sectional view-points, the transcendent force works on towards a synthesis. This force is of the genius of the land itself. And that is the element which ought to have been emphasised. But we have made the communities conscious, not of the cementing forces, but of the points of divergence. This consciousness, necessarily vicious, has created the present mistrust and hatred. And whatever pacts and contracts we may make, the problem will never be solved unless sanity returns, and the points of unity are impressed on our consciousness. Then the difficulties which now seem almost insuperable would be easily and automatically removed. It is always true that when we feel as one, we ignore even real differences, and when we disagree, even real unity galls and irritates.

Take again the case of Brahmin Non-Brahmin quarrel. Who can deny that the Brahmins have enjoyed a higher social position than the Non-Brahmins, or that the Brahmins who were the promulgators of social laws and customs, have not done as they ought to have done by the other castes? But all these do not justify virulent attack on the Brahmins and self-alienation of the Non-Brahmins from the Hindu community. Here also the same fact has to be remembered. Both Brahmins and Non-Brahmins were victims of circumstances. In any case, the solution does not lie in creating grievances against the Brahmins. We have to take advantage of the forces which will eliminate the present defects without destroying the continuity and harmony of the society. We must not crystallise around the

bitter core of grievances and indulge in mutual recriminations. The transcendent attitude is the surest means of solution.

Our women's movement is also going the way of short-sightedness. In the West, the women's freedom movement was a kind of crusade against men. It is men who were responsible for women's degradation! The result has been on the whole unfortunate. India also seems to be trying to follow suit. It may be that the conditions of women in India are not as happy as they should be. But the remedy lies not in antagonising men or established ideals, but in taking advantage of them to realise a better state.

We need not multiply examples. In every case, it is the same blunder. We forget that the apparent causes are scarcely the real causes of our difficulties. By attacking the difficulties where they seem to exist, we are only misleading ourselves. We must probe deeper. We must make our difficulties impersonal. We must trace them to principles and not to persons, and try to remove them there. But because we are not doing so, our outlook has become narrow, we are creating factions, our struggles are becoming suicidal, and the confusion of ideas and ideals is growing day by day.

And that is not all. The nation is beset with many problems. Naturally, different persons are trying to solve different problems. And the same solution is not being proposed by all for the same problem. This is certainly a source of confusion. As for example, social reform. Those who are eager to ameliorate our social conditions, do not agree about the means. Necessarily there is clash. A deeper cause of confusion is that the problems are inter-linked but the solutions are not. Social conditions, as is well-known, do not exist by themselves. There are various forces moulding them. There is religion, there is culture. There are political and economic forces. There is education. There are climatic conditions and there

is past history. A social reformer should properly understand and measure all these forces. He cannot defy them with impunity. Yet, how many social reformers are there, who think as deeply as that? They dwell only on the social conditions, and try to solve them in a purely humanitarian or rational spirit. But the reaction of their reform measures often proves disastrous to the other departments of national life.

All such sectional outlooks have added greatly to our mental confusion; and it almost seems that the nation has lost its unitary consciousness and is broken into a thousand pieces.

## II

A thoughtful writer remarked lately in course of an article: "Just as in these days the predominant interest of my countrymen is politics, so in my boyhood their predominant interest was religion." This is quite true. Up to the end of the nineteenth century and even to the end of the first decade of the present century, the country seemed to feel religion as its sovereign interest. Religion was the one and the greatest quest of its life. But that interest no longer predominates and other interests are about to usurp its place. Politics indeed seems to be the strongest tendency of the present national mind. It almost seems as if politics is going to be the central factor and the centre of crystallisation of all national aspirations and activities. If we but carefully observe, we shall find that society, economics, cultural ideals, domestic relations, communal ideals, education, all are being slowly moulded to contribute to the growth of a modern State in India after the Western model. Even religion is being made to serve that purpose. Those who value the ancient ideals of India, cannot look on with equanimity on this evolution or rather revolution. Is religion going to be made secondary in the national life? Is politics going to be the dominating factor? If it does, India is surely heading for a disaster.

Our readers may be aware that we do

not favour this predominance of politics in the Indian national life. In fact we have often sounded a note of warning against it. We have been, in consequence, often asked to make our position clear as regards politics. Do we not believe that India should be politically free? If so, should we not make every attempt to reach that consummation? If we desist from political work, how then can the struggle for freedom go on, and how can we ever hope to get rid of political slavery? These are some of the questions put to us, and no doubt they deserve some answer. But we cannot hope to convince our questioners unless the issues are clearly formulated. At the outset there must be a clear enunciation of the goal which we want to reach. If we try to closely examine the goal we are supposed to have in view, we shall find that many of us have a very hazy notion about it. We are not at all clear in our ideas. Many of us simply want that we should be free from British domination. Whether it is to be the Dominion status or complete independence, we need not consider here. The premier political organisation of the country has declared for the latter. But the implications of the freedom from British domination are not, it seems, properly considered. Surely by this freedom is also meant the growth of a national power and efficiency that would be able to maintain the freedom won. This aspect, we believe, is the central fact of the freedom movement. Those who are out and out politicians, even they should remember that the goal they are trying to reach, is not merely the getting rid of the British control, but the creation of an invincible power in the nation. In fact without this we can never hope to attain political independence. There is a subtle law governing political freedom and subjection. It is that if want of power makes us slaves, acquisition of it will automatically make us free. Even those who do not believe in spiritual forces, must concede this need of power. But how to make the nation powerful?

Suppose, however, we have become politically free. Where do we stand? Is it all right with us in every respect? History shows that as soon as we get rid of a foreign power, we do not necessarily acquire political stability. That in India the question of political stability is a difficult one, none would deny. Hard struggle would be required before all the divergent political forces can be co-ordinated. But apart from political stability, there are more fundamental needs: economic stability, social reconstruction, organisation of education and health, cultural regeneration, and above all, spiritual upliftment. Let us look at the free nations of the present day. They are politically free. They have health and wealth. They have wide-spread education. But in spite of all these, where are they? Most of them are seething with moral discontent. They are a menace to themselves and to the world. They have no peace at home. Their mind is not free. Classes are fighting with classes. Everywhere there is strife and struggle. We do not mean that they are worse than us, or that political slavery does not count or is preferable. What we want to point out is that mere political freedom does not touch even the fringe of the main problem of man. What is it? What is it that man wants, which no amount of earthly power, health, wealth and so-called knowledge can procure? We may not believe in God or soul or spirituality. But still we cannot deny that the tangible achievements of life are not enough to give us satisfaction. Those who are for abolishing God cannot tell us what, if not God, can fill up the void of our soul.

But let us not go at once so far. Our political friends may find the atmosphere too rarified for their lungs. Admitting that our aim is to establish a prosperous secular state, we must admit that the main problems are to give health to the people, organise their economic life, and give them social facilities, rights and privileges and a fine education, and make them cultured. Politicians would agree

that these are essential. Political freedom by itself is little use, if we do not have the above-mentioned equipments. Now the question is: Are these inevitably interlinked with political freedom? There are a good many people who assume that they are so. This is an important point. We for ourselves do not hold this view. We do not ignore the fact that under foreign rule there are difficulties. But we need not unnecessarily magnify them. We believe that there is scope for great improvement even in the present circumstances. No doubt if the Government had more earnestly taken up the task of education, sanitation and industrial re-organisation, the country would have fared better than now. And things would have been easier to accomplish. But our politicians also hold that whether it be in the name of Government or not, it is we, Indians, who will have to do all that are necessary for the country's regeneration. Surely no one dreams that when the country will be free, we shall all sit comfortably at home and people of other lands would come and perform all the works of re-organisation. It comes to this, then, that whereas politicians are waiting for better days to begin constructive work, others who may not believe in politics want to begin construction even now, and they believe that though there may be obstruction and opposition from interested quarters, there is enough freedom and scope still available in the country to push on with their work. We believe that much spiritual, moral, social, sanitary, educational and economical work can be done without any fear of obstruction from any quarter. Perhaps on this point our political friends would not agree with us. But we cannot deny our own experience.

But perhaps we are wrong in assuming that the political workers are not devoting their attention to those constructive works. We may at once mention the All-India Spinners' Association. It is doing splendid work. There is the anti-untouchability campaign, cam-

paign against the drink evil, upliftment of backward classes, the different Khaddar Associations of Bengal, such as the Abhoy Ashram, and the Khadi Pratishtan, etc., etc. They are not only doing their specific works, but also devoting themselves to works of educational, sanitary and moral improvement. There are besides many other smaller organisations not so well-known, which are equally devoted to works of reconstruction. Great praise is due to them. They are connected with politics. But we should here point out that simply because they are doing this in the name of Congress or under its ægis, it does not follow that their work is also political. They are really doing constructive work. And if they sever their political connections, their work will not thrive less, on the other hand, we believe it will thrive more. It is well-known that the All-India Spinners' Association is only nominally under the Congress. It is really an autonomous economic organisation, having its own economic ideals and methods of work. And Mahatma Gandhi wanted in the Lahore Congress to create other such autonomous bodies for carrying campaigns against drink, untouchability and foreign cloth. Any one can organise such independent bodies outside the Congress, though it is true that at the beginning such bodies would not find as much funds at their command or as much recognition by the public as when started under the Congress, and the Congress also, shorn of these auxiliary bodies, would find its powers limited. But if there is sincerity, earnestness, perseverance and patience, funds, recognition, prestige, all will come. We do not, therefore, consider such constructive works as really political, in so far as their ostensible purpose is the social or economic upliftment or education of the country and not mainly the embarrassment of the powers that be.

We have not considered another movement for the all-round reform of the country, we mean the cry of Revolution. We do not think the movement

is as strong in the other provinces as in Bengal. There the politicians find that mere political reform is little or nothing. The main reforms should be carried out in the socio-economic system, in the ideals and methods of education, in the life's outlook. Youths are the authors of this movement. They believe that youths alone are capable of carrying out the necessary drastic reforms. They defy the established ideals. They dream of higher and happier conditions and are impatient to realise them all at once, and not slowly and step by step. And their slogan is "Long live Revolution!" The only element appreciable in this movement is the youthful enthusiasm and the desire to improve the national conditions. All other elements are of doubtful value. It is nonsense to say that youths will lead the nation. Wisdom, experience, understanding, knowledge are not nothing. After all is said and done, it is these that count. Youths by the very quality of their youthfulness cannot lead us, unless they are also wise, experienced, able and profound. Whoever would possess these qualities would lead, be they young or old. This movement is still in the region of sentiment, it has not struck root in the realities. Let it face the realities, it will do wonders.

### III

So even political organisations feel that they must not be merely political. They also feel the urgent need of national reconstruction, of non-political work. But in many cases these activities are being made the appendages of politics itself. This is unfortunate. Suddenly to set about picketting toddy shops or foreign cloth shops simply because certain political bodies have decided on it, leaves the real drink or economic problems untouched. For suddenly again all these stop when the political situation changes. It is unnecessary to dilate upon this point. All thinking minds would agree that these non-political works are extremely important in them-

selves, and that any amount of time and energy can be devoted to them and yet we may not do enough. Our question to politicians is, therefore, whether they would wish that these works be neglected and all men and money-power diverted to purely political activities, or they would like the works of reconstruction carried on vigorously and unimpededly even under the present conditions. The question of questions before the country is this: We have a certain number of sincere unselfish souls who are eager to devote themselves to the cause of the country. We have certain resources. We have a certain amount of energy which we can devote to the service of the nation. Which field of work would these men and women choose and where shall all these energies and resources be applied? All thoughtful persons would agree that it must be purely constructive work. For whatever we do in that line, would be of permanent benefit whether the country be free or bound. If we can grow in physical, mental and spiritual health, if our sanitation is improved, economics rehabilitated, society reformed, spirituality revived, we shall have achieved what all men and women, bound or free, seek to achieve. The main purpose of our national life will have been realised. We have seen that all the drudgery that the work of reconstruction means, will have to be undergone at one time or another. It is infinitely better that it is undertaken even now; that would save great trouble in the future. It is idle to deny that the change of the governmental powers would inevitably cause some dislocation in the collective life of the country. It is safe and prudent to remould the collective life to the new forms even before the governing agencies change. We shall thereby be spared many future difficulties. Besides, the very efforts at reconstruction will endow us with an amount of power, experience and self-confidence, which are the very means of achieving freedom. We must acquire power. We must conserve power.

Constructive work is one of the potent means of doing it.

It may be argued here that we need not make any such extreme choice. We may do both political and non-political work. This argument is significant. But would such a combination be really fruitful? What is our experience? The political work itself exhausts so much of our energy that little is left for more solid work. Very few can do both. Constructive work requires a whole-hearted allegiance, the devotion of all time and energy to it. If one wishes to do constructive work, let him cut off all other activities and apply himself entirely to it. It may be said that since a co-ordination of all the different activities and powers of the nation is necessary to fight the political battle successfully, constructive work should not be divorced from politics, that though for efficiency's sake some workers may be entirely detailed to constructive work, still they must be under a supervising and controlling political organisation, and that they must never forget their allegiance and duty to it. This brings us to a very important point which we must very carefully consider. On our decision of this point, much of our future progress depends. All nations with secular outlooks have necessarily to make the state the controlling and motive power of their collective life. Every corporate life must have a basis. That basis is chosen according to the predominant tendency of the national mind. It can be material, mental or spiritual. Those nations which are dominated by the greed of earthly powers and prosperity, must necessarily have politics as their motive and controlling force. The state governs every activity, and the nation becomes secular in outlook and action. When India also wants to do the same, it really, though maybe unconsciously, means to secularise the collective life. We are, therefore, absolutely against the state assuming supreme power in the nation, for that will eventually mean the deterioration of the deeper powers

of the national soul. We want politics to occupy a subordinate place. We, therefore, want that other activities should be free from political influence and be governed by the ultimate ideals of the nation. Here is then the crucial question : Which shall be the governing principle of the Indian nation, politics or spirituality? Who shall lead, politicians or spiritual men?

This question cannot possibly be answered without the help of philosophy. We put off its consideration for fear our politicians would find themselves in too deep water. But at this stage, it is urgent. What is the purpose of life? Wherein is our satisfaction and fulfilment? We may deny the affirmations of our glorious ancestors. But how can we deny the verdict of history? What is the witness of the other nations? The Western nations have enough of what we are aspiring after. They are rich and powerful, free and cultured. And yet all these have not availed them anything. They are wild with discontent. They want a salve for their soul, they do not know where to find it. Their thinkers and reformers have tried various means. Even now they are struggling frantically. But none of these satisfies them. Obviously they must have something which is not of this world, if they are to find peace at all. Has not this any lesson for us? Suppose we have earned all we want,—we have a well-regulated state, prosperous industry and trade, and all the blessings of the earth. A problem will still remain unsolved : How to find peace and satisfaction. Should not India think of this from even now? If it is true that national freedom is primarily a condition of inner excellence, that must be begun to be acquired from even now.

But we refuse to assess the claim of spirituality at such a low value. Spiritual ideals have an absolute value. For even if a nation can become great without spiritual excellence, individuals never can. Are we to scrap the age-long struggles and achievements of our

forefathers so easily? Even for political greatness we refuse to go so far. But it is not necessary to plead the cause of spiritual ideals. None can really deny them. The spirit is the essence of man. In its realisation lies his permanent satisfaction. This is the supreme fact of his being. Therefore, this must also be supreme in the scale of collective values. The question is not of accepting or denying it, but of incorporating it truly and wisely in the national life. Yet, as we have remarked on many other occasions, we need not and indeed cannot (many of us) reach the spirit by ignoring or neglecting the secular aspects of life. All these must be recognised, but in such a spirit that the entire outlook would change and conduce pre-eminently to our spiritual growth. In fact, there must be an ever present sense of the *Virāt*, the collective being, of the society, nation, humanity, in our mind, all ennobled and transmuted by a transcendental spiritual consciousness.

#### IV

This is the greatest need of the hour : a new outlook all-encompassing, denying nothing, cosmic, infinite. There is no other way out of the present mental confusion of the nation than through the creation of such an outlook. We have shown above how the scale of values has been made topsyturvy. We noted the communal and social quarrels. We have also examined the claims and scope of politics. In all these there is the same defect : confusion of values. We have lost the sense of proportion in the national affairs. In our individual life also the relative values of functions are ignored. What else can we expect under these conditions than bewilderment?

Long ago the solution of these acute problems was envisaged by a prophetic soul, Swami Vivekananda. He felt that all these necessities and difficulties would arise. He knew that the unnatural ultra-subjectivism of his people would give way before the impact of coming events, the commingling of the world's



nations and their ideas and desires, and he propounded an ideal which is absolutely spiritual and therefore the highest possible and at the same time subsumes the various activities and aspirations of the people. It is subjective and objective at the same time. In fact, all spiritual ideals must satisfy the demands of both our inner being and the outer world. For we are most of us bound up with the collective life and governed by it. We cannot be moved entirely by our subjective thoughts and impulses. We must also live and move in harmony with the outer life, of which we are integral parts. An ideal which satisfies only either of these claims is partial, it will not satisfy men for long and will be rejected by them sooner or later. True wisdom lies in co-ordinating both the claims in one spiritual ideal. Swami Vivekananda did it in his doctrine of the Practical Vedanta. The doctrine of *Karma Yoga*, it is true, has been in existence for ages in India, spiritualising all work. But the Swami's ideal is somewhat different from that. In *Karma Yoga*, the urge for unifying oneself with the interests of all is not manifest. It only teaches us to do the work that may have been allotted to us in the proper spirit. It does not create that cosmic feeling which makes the aspirations and sufferings of others one's own. But the Swami's ideal does. *Karma Yoga* by itself often leads to too much subjectivism. But the Swami's ideal is a check to that. It harmonises the subjective and objective aspects of our life into a beautiful synthesis. This is very important and significant. We have in course of our present essay detailed the various needs of our country. None of these can be ignored. We may not ask all to shut themselves in exclusive contemplation. Our spiritual fervour must manifest itself in the manifold service of the nation and humanity. If the truth of the universe is *Brahman*, if all men are really *Brahman*, and if I am that *Brahman*, then I am indeed all, and the joys and

sorrows of all should be mine. In all things and activities I must see only the expression of the *Brahman* and surrender myself unreservedly to that supernal vision. This is the ideal which the Swami held before India and the world, for in this is the peace eternal of individuals and nations and their fulfilment. To those who are grovelling in sense-objects and who live in constant excitement and has no time for quiet thought or introspection, this ideal and outlook may seem utopian. To them it may appear too complex. But those who have the least spiritual sense, as we hope many of our countrymen have, will find it the easiest and most natural. It would seem to them not only the simplest prescription, but also the most realistic. For it is certainly unrealistic to work and live without any cognition of the substance and the substratum of life and universe, -*Brahman*.

This ideal and outlook is the great solvent of our difficulties. This will bring order into the present chaos. The very first effect of the conception of this outlook would be to cease to consider any persons or nations responsible for our sufferings. Swamiji said that *Vedântins* do not hold others responsible for their suffering, they trace them to causes inherent in themselves. This is undoubtedly the truer view of the case and not an arbitrary creed. It is because of our weakness that diseases can attack us. And it is because of our national weakness that we could be politically, economically or culturally enslaved. This view will remove much of our mental irritation. This will necessarily minimise the value of political agitation in our eyes. If we only analyse, we shall find that behind much of political agitation, there is the consciousness that certain persons are responsible for our suffering. That does not mean that there would not be any need of political action or that certain persons really do not cause suffering. But both those who suffer and those who cause suffering are victims of circumstances and forces which have been possible

because of our weakness. That is the root cause and that we must remove. Our struggle would become impersonal. Thus only can our national struggle be truly non-violent. With the minimising of politics, we shall regain the true sense of proportions in the affairs of the nation. We shall feel the relative values of aspirations and needs. But what is more important, we shall deny none. For by the very force of our ideal, by our very outlook, our interest would be all-comprehensive. But all activities, however, would be conceived from the spiritual view-point. This will endow us with infinite patience and perseverance. Our work will be intense, unselfish, profound and effective. And above all, all men and women will appear to us as the embodiments of Divinity itself. This vision which we shall try to keep vivid every moment in our soul, will not only advance us rapidly along the spiritual path, but would also benefit all with whom we shall come in contact. No other outlook can call forth so much devotion, energy, love and perseverance. No other ideal would make our activity and interest so comprehensive. And even a little of the realisation of this ideal would evoke such a tremendous power that nothing would ever be able to obstruct the national progress. Let us not forget that an indignant glance of righteousness is more potent than the physical blows of impure anger. There is a power in moral and spiritual justice,

which no man can ever withstand. This is no fiction, but the sternest reality.

Do we condemn politics? No. Far be it from us to doubt the sincerity and self-sacrifice of many of our noble men and women who are to-day active in the political field. Their struggle is keen. Their feeling for the country is unimpeachable. But we do hold that there are better fields of action, better not merely on spiritual grounds, but because there we can do greater good to the country. Therefore, our call to the nation is that those who are able to conceive the higher ideal as propounded by Swami Vivekananda, let them live and work in this higher spirit. They would thereby be doing greater and more permanent service to the nation. But those that are unable to live up to these high ideals, must necessarily work where they can. But let them never deny what they are unable to understand, and let them not arrogate to themselves privileges which are not really theirs but belong to better qualified persons. Let them never say that they represent all or the highest functions of the nation. We wish them god-speed, but at the same time we shall be unceasing in our appeal to the better conscience of our people and seek to win them over to the spiritual, and therefore the true, ideals of the Indian nation. And we shall certainly resist all encroachment of politics or other secular interests upon the domains of the spirit. The spiritual ideal must ever reign supreme.

## THE DIARY OF A DISCIPLE

1ST JUNE, 1918.

It was Sunday afternoon at the Belur Math. Many devotees were sitting before Swami Brahmananda. One of them asked: "Maharaj, how can one have yearning for the Lord?"

*Swami*: "You must first purify your mind by keeping company with the *Sādhus* and devotees and receiving

instructions from your *Guru*. Next you must practise hard *Sādhanā*. Only then would you feel an yearning for God. One requires a teacher even when one wants to learn stealing. And this sublime *Brahma-Vidyā*—Knowledge of Brahman—does it not require a teacher to acquire it?"

Thus the Swami spoke for a time and then said: "When you go to a *Sādhu*,

you must ask him questions. Ask me whatever you want to know."

*Devotee* : "How can one have peace?"

*Swami* : "By loving God, and by having true faith in Him. You cannot have it at the very beginning. At first there must be great peacelessness; your heart will be full of anguish at not having yet realised the Lord. But it is all right; the more thirsty you are, the better you will relish water. You must create peacelessness, if there is none. When men no longer find any joy in the world, they feel restless and then they are attracted towards God."

*Devotee* : "How can one have love for God?"

*Swami* : "By trying to realise Him, by singing His name and praise, and by praying to Him. Thus have the saints realised Him."

*Devotee* : "Can I not realise God, while living in the world?"

*Swami* : "Does anyone live outside the world?"

*Devotee* : "I mean, while living in the family."

*Swami* : "Say that. Yes, you can. But with difficulty."

*Devotee* : "May one renounce the world when one feels *Vairāgya*, dispassion, for it?"

*Swami* : "Yes. He ought to. And that indeed is true *Vairāgya*, this dispassion for all worldly things. When once you have it, it never dies; on the other hand, it grows, like fire. After one has once come out of the world, one never wants to go back into it."

*Devotee* : "Can I not do without a *Guru*?"

*Swami* : "I think not. No, you can never do without him. Who is the *Guru*? He who points out the path to your *Ista* (Chosen Deity) by, say, giving you a fixed Name to repeat. You may have many *Upagurus*, subsidiary teachers. The real *Guru* will tell you which *Sādhana* to practise, and he will advise you to keep the company of devotees. Formerly, it was customary for the disciple to live in the house of

his *Guru*, so that the *Guru* could watch over the disciple and the disciple could serve the *Guru*, and if the disciple went wrong, the *Guru* could bring him back to the right path. Therefore, you should never make one your *Guru*, unless he is a knower of *Brahman*, or very highly advanced in spirituality."

*Devotee* : "But how am I to know that a person is such?"

*Swami* : "You will know if you live with him for some time. The *Guru* also will then observe you. If you have much hankering for the world, which it would be difficult to check, he must not initiate you, but send you back. If you want to make anyone your *Guru*, live near him for sometime and watch his ways. The system of hereditary *Gurus* has this advantage that the *Guru* and the disciple both know each other's family history well.

"The means of concentrating the mind is *Sādhana*. *Prāṇāyāma*, breath-control, is also one of the means. But it is not safe for a householder;—if one is not continent, one falls ill; and one must have nutritious food, a fine place and pure air. In order to have meditation and concentration, you must practise in solitude; the more you will try, the more you will achieve. Wherever you find conditions favourable, say, if there is a fine scenery, sit down to meditate. Seek Him, and renounce *Kāmini-Kāanchana*, lust and gold. But first renounce internally. These are evanescent. Take off your mind from them.

"God is both with form and formless and He is also above form and formlessness. What does the *Vedānta* mean by saying that *Brahman* is true and the world false? Only that the world as we see it now is false. The world vanishes in *Samādhi*, you feel that you have been experiencing a great joy. The *Rishis* experienced that absolute joy. What exists in *Samādhi* cannot be explained. Then there is no longer 'I' or 'thou' but only *Satchidānanda*—Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute.

"If you ask me : What is the proof of God? I say that the *Sādhus* have stated that they have realised God and they have also pointed out the way to His realisation. The Master said : 'Merely saying "hemp," "hemp" will not intoxicate you. You must procure hemp, prepare it and take it, and then wait a little. Only then would you feel the intoxication. Even so merely saying "God," "God" will not make you realise Him. You must practise *Sādhanā* and then wait a little.'"

*Devotee* : "While making *Japa* (repetition of the name of God), I sometimes forget to do so. What is this?"

*Swami* : "Patanjali has said that this is an obstruction to *Yoga*. To meditate is to think and become conscious of Him. When meditation will be intense, when God will actually reveal himself, you will have *Samādhi*. If you realise *Samādhi*, the joy of it will persist for a long time, some say, for all times.

"Sri Chaitanya sent one of his disciples to Rai Ramananda. The disciple found him rolling in luxury. But as soon as the name of the Lord was

uttered, love welled forth from his heart like a fountain. It is said that unless one is a *Sādhu* one cannot know a *Sādhu*, just as a brinjal-seller cannot know the value of a diamond. If anyone realises a high spiritual state through *Sādhanā*, he himself can know it. Think during meditation that desires for worldly things are worthless. This will leave a good impression on the mind. As you will drive away the desires from your mind, good thoughts and feelings will arise in it. If you see light or hear supernatural sound during meditation, know that you are going on rightly. But do not attach any importance to these lights and sounds, though they are good signs. While meditating in a solitary place, you may sometimes hear the sound *Om* or the ringing of bells or natural sounds from afar.

"If Sankara prayed to the Divine Mother saying : 'Thou art my refuge, O Mother!' it was only as an example for the men of the world,—to teach them that God can be realised by every means."

## MAHATMA GANDHI'S ECONOMIC IDEAS

By SHIV CHANDRA DATTA, M.A., B.L.

### INTRODUCTION

The elements of modern economic life are not rare in present-day India. India to-day has 91 Banks (with capital of Rs. 1 lakh or more each), 80 Insurance Companies, 40,000 miles of railways, about 7,000 factories and about 15 lakhs of factory labourers. But considering the vastness of the land and its enormous population, the industrialization that has already taken place, though sufficient to make India the eighth industrial power in the world, is yet almost negligible. Most of the 685 thousand and odd villages of India are yet almost untouched by the currents of modern life. Agriculture forms the occupation of 71 p.c. and cottage industries of 10 p.c. of

the people (organized industries of only 1 p.c.). Both the occupations are carried on even to-day with the most primitive implements and by a people who, however intelligent, are undoubtedly lethargic, unambitious and ruled by customs which have lost their meaning and vitality ages ago. Economic India, therefore, may well be said to stand at the cross-roads. On the one hand, we may fashion the economic life of this country after that of the advanced countries of Europe and America. On the other hand, we may try to cling with tenacity to a slightly modernized edition of the primitive economic system which prevails almost throughout the country. Both these alternatives are equally open to us to-day. Along what

lines is the economic future of this great, but yet undeveloped and backward, country to be directed?

As a matter of fact we find that to-day the economic evolution of this country has been advancing along two divergent paths. On the one hand, the industrialization of India has been advancing as a result of the efforts of both the people and the Government. On the other hand, an active and earnest endeavour is being made at present, to hold fast to the idealized mediæval villages of India after applying slight patches of modernism here and there.

These two forces are actively operative before our eyes to-day.

Which will our countrymen follow? With which will our countrymen throw in their weight? Which of these deserves our deliberate, active and sincere support?

These questions demand an urgent answer.

The aim of the present series of articles is to provide the answer to these questions by studying the economic ideas and ideals of Mahatma Gandhi and Professor Benoy Kumar Sarkar.

Mahatma Gandhi does not profess to be an economist. But he has certain clear-cut and definite economic conceptions. And he has been trying his utmost, with the whole weight of his magnetic personality, to reconstruct the economic life of the country after his own heart.

And, of the many Indian economists in this country to-day who are trying to offer a prudent guidance to the economic activities of this land, one of the most prominent in our eyes is Professor Benoy Kumar Sarkar.

Our aim in this series of articles is to discover the path which Economic India should traverse if she is to develop herself and benefit the world. And it shall be our endeavour to discover that path by studying the economic conceptions and programmes of the two great teachers whose names we have already mentioned.

We shall first of all point out

Mahatma Gandhi's attitude towards Western civilization, industrialism, machinery, the Science of Economics and towards cities as opposed to villages. His interpretation of the principle of Swadeshi and his conception of the economic ideal will then be presented.

#### WESTERN CIVILISATION TO BE SHUNNED

The Eastern and Western civilizations are regarded as having exactly opposite characteristics. The Eastern civilization<sup>1</sup> is spiritual and has for its aim the discovery of spiritual laws; the Western is material and has for its end the discovery of material laws. The former teaches the limitation of worldly ambition and the cultivation of an unlimited spiritual ambition; the latter teaches the cultivation of an unlimited material ambition. The Eastern civilization inculcates belief in a future state; such a belief is only superficial in the West. The Western civilization encourages intense material activity; but this is condemned in the East. The 'life-corroding competition' of the Western civilization is sought to be prevented in the Eastern.

These two civilizations have grown up in different surroundings. It is for this reason that their characteristics differ. Each is good for its own followers.<sup>2</sup> Hence, Indians should not attempt to adopt Western civilization. If they attempt to copy it, they will bring about their own ruin. India has not perished till now only because she has faithfully clung to her own civilization.<sup>3</sup> The Western civilization aims at material progress and hence is not suited for the spiritual progress which is the aim of the Eastern civilization.

Civilization, according to Gandhiji, means the performance of one's duty, which is regarded as convertible with the control over one's mind and passion. (*Indian Home Rule*, p. 64). Therefore, according to him, it refers to the conquest of internal nature only.

<sup>1</sup> *Young India*, 1927, p. 176.

<sup>2</sup> *Young India*, 1927, p. 896.

Each has its own peculiar defects. The Westerners are manfully struggling to remove the evils of their civilization. Indians also should attempt to remove the defects of their own civilization, but should not imitate the civilization of the West (*Young India*, 1927, p. 176).

There is no objection to learning some useful things from the West.<sup>4</sup> But the introduction of Western civilization as such is to be vigorously resisted. Adaptations may be made, but any radical change must be opposed (*Speeches and Writings*, p. 299). Changes may be tolerated, provided the ideal of material progress is not substituted for that of spiritual progress, and the habit of the restriction of wants is not replaced by that of their multiplication (*Young India*, 1927, pp. 85, 176, 396).

Most of the masses in India are still immune from the influence of Western civilization. But the classes have taken to imitating Western civilization (*Indian Home Rule*, p. 66; *Young India*, 1927, p. 176). Their faith in their own civilization should be revived.

This does not mean a revival of the ancient Aryan civilization as it was in the past. For, we do not know what ancient Aryan civilization exactly was, or when it flourished (*Young India*, 1927, p. 253).

#### INDUSTRIALISM TO BE RESISTED

Industrialism, according to Mahatma Gandhi, seems to signify an economic system in which large-scale industries are carried on by capitalists for their personal profit.

He styles himself an 'uncompromising opponent of industrialism.' The reasons for this attitude are : (1) Industrialism thrives on the exploitation of conquered races. The economic imperialism of England is referred to as having already subjected many nations to slavery. The industrialism of Europe is cited as having led to the loss of liberty of many races. What other races will

India exploit?<sup>5</sup> No other race is available for exploitation by such a big country as India. Hence, industrialism in India can only lead to the exploitation of the Indian masses. (2) Industrialism leads to competition for markets abroad, which in its turn leads to war. (3) Industrialism leads to the destruction of village life. It is too early yet to say positively that the destruction of village life in the West will conduce to the benefit either of the West or of humanity (*Young India*, 1927, p. 150). (4) It brings about unemployment through the application of machinery and natural power to the work of production. (5) It leads to the concentration of wealth in a few hands and hence to the control of the majority by the minority.

Because of these evils, industrialism is regarded as 'all evil.'<sup>6</sup> The advent of industrialism must be resisted at any cost. Khadi itself is regarded as a weapon for resisting industrialism.

While industrialism is regarded as 'all evil', Mahatma Gandhi is of opinion that industrialism can be controlled. For, industrialism is 'like a force of Nature,' and it is 'given to man to control Nature and to conquer her forces' (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, p. 683).

Probably this idea has led him to give the opinion that as regards the cotton mills which have already been established in India, the solution is to be found not by destroying them, but by inducing their owners to regard their mills as a national trust and hence to

"Shall we take the case of England? What has she been doing but exploiting India and Africa? And India will have to find out countries as big as herself for exploitation" (*Young India*, 1927, p. 276). "God forbid that India should ever take to industrialism after the manner of the West. The economic imperialism of a single tiny island kingdom (England) is to-day keeping the world in chains. If an entire nation of 300 millions took to similar economic exploitation, it would strip the world bare like locusts" (*Young India*, 1928, p. 422).

"The fact is that this industrial civilisation is a disease, because it is all evil" (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, p. 1187).

<sup>4</sup> *Young India*, 1927, p. 258.

conduct them for the welfare of the people. If the capitalists in India do not take this step 'they will either destroy themselves or destroy the masses.'

It has been said already that Mahatma Gandhi is of opinion that industrialism is an evil and that it is to be resisted at all costs. But he also advances the view that the conditions of India and Europe are so very different that to try to industrialize India is 'to attempt the impossible.' On the one hand, India will never be industrialized like Europe, on the other hand, Europe must go back to her simplicity and village life if Europe is to be saved from ruin (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, p. 688-84).

#### QUALIFIED APPROVAL FOR MACHINERY

Mahatma Gandhi's present attitude towards machinery is not the same as it was when he wrote the *Indian Home Rule* (4th edition, 1921). In that book he vehemently opposes all machinery and all the modern methods of communication and transportation without exception. A few specimens of his views on machinery as expressed in the pages of the *Indian Home Rule* (Chapter XIX) are being given here : "Machinery represents a great sin" (p. 105); "It is necessary to realize that machinery is bad" (p. 109); "If the machinery craze grows in our country, it will become an unhappy land" (p. 106); "I cannot recall a single point in favour of machinery. Books can be written to demonstrate its evils" (p. 109).

The reasons for this attitude towards machinery, so far as we can gather from the above-mentioned chapter, are : (1) The Manchester machineries are responsible for the destruction of Indian handicrafts and hence for the impoverishment of India; (2) Europeans themselves are heading towards ruin because of machineries; (3) the condition of labourers plying machineries in factories

is miserable; (4) machineries are products of Western civilization.

His attitude towards machineries as evident in the pages of *Young India* (1924-28) is not one of uncompromising hostility.

His principal grievances against machineries as mentioned in *Young India* (1924-28) are these : (1) They cause unemployment; (2) they bring about the concentration of wealth in a few hands; (3) they 'make atrophied the limbs of men'; (4) they do not advance men's spiritual progress; on the contrary, they hinder it; (5) they give rise to 'needless worry and fateful hurry.'

For these reasons, *ideally speaking*, machinery is still undesirable. Mahatma Gandhi 'would not shed a single tear if all machineries were to disappear from the earth.'

But he thinks that 'machinery has come to stay,' 'it is bound to remain.'

Hence, he is not 'for the eradication of all machinery but for its limitation'.

He can allow such machinery only to remain, which (1) saves human labour (Singer's Sewing Machines approved of, because they save unnecessary human labour), (2) is not run for the greed of the owners (what is meant here is made clear in the following passages : a humane spirit should be introduced among the men behind the machinery; men in charge of machineries to think not of themselves or even of the nation to which they belong but of the whole human race [*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, p. 1109]), (3) is needed for the amenities of life, (4) satisfies our primary wants (bicycles and motor cars are not required, for they are not necessary), (5) is needed for life-saving purposes.

At p. 1187 (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan) he says that he is prepared to have steamships, telegraphs, etc., only if they can be retained 'without the support of industrialism and all it connotes.' At p. 1029 (*ibid*) he says :

<sup>1</sup> *Young India*, 1928, p. 422.

<sup>2</sup> *Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, p. 1181.

"What I object to is the *craze for machinery*, not *machinery as such*. The craze is for what they call labour-saving machinery. Men go on saving labour till thousands are without work and thrown on the open streets to die of starvation. I want to save time and labour not for a fraction of mankind but for all. I want the concentration of wealth not in the hands of a few, but in the hands of all. To-day machinery merely helps a few to ride on the backs of millions." (*Italics are of the writer*). Any intention of destroying machinery, even if he had the power to do so, is denied at p. 1271 (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan).

At present, therefore, Mahatma Gandhi shows a somewhat tolerant attitude towards machineries.

What is his attitude then, towards factories, which must exist if machineries are to be manufactured?

The existence of factories may be tolerated, provided (1) they are nationalised or state-controlled, (2) they are worked under ideal conditions, (3) they are worked not for profit but for the benefit of humanity, (4) the labourers are assured of a living wage, and (5) the task of the labourers is not a drudgery (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, p. 1030).

#### ECONOMICS, UNLESS SPIRITUALIZED, NOT A NECESSARY SCIENCE<sup>9</sup>

Economics is regarded as a science which deals merely with the means for the acquisition of wealth. Mahatma Gandhi is against the acquisition of an unlimited amount of wealth (economic progress). Economic progress, according to him, is an obstacle to moral progress. A human being should not require anything more than ordinary food, clothing and shelter as regards his material needs. And it is not very difficult to provide for these needs. "For this very simple performance we need no as-

sistance from economists or their laws" (*Speeches and Writings*, p. 255). It is implied here that no separate subject called Economics is at all required. According to him the scriptures are 'sounder treatises on the laws of Economics than many of the modern textbooks' (*Speeches and Writings*, p. 256).

The relation between Religion and Economics has been discussed on many occasions. According to him, no religion can ignore the elementary principles of Economics. Hence, food and clothing are to be provided for before religious instruction can be imparted. Similarly, Economics should not ignore the fundamental principles of religion. "Whereas religion to be worth anything must be capable of being reduced to terms of economics, economics to be worth anything must be capable of being reduced to terms of religion or spirituality" (*Young India*, 1927, p. 312).<sup>10</sup>

The relation of Economics to Religion is discussed a little elaborately at p. 866 of the *Young India* for 1927, in connection. Mahatma Gandhi's main purpose in that discussion is to stress the point that even religious institutions like the Cow Protection Societies must be run in such a manner as to yield an income sufficient to maintain the useless cows. To uphold this point he urges that even religious institutions cannot ignore the elementary principles of Economics. He cites in support that Nature herself follows this principle. Nature has implanted in men the desire for food, and she has also provided enough food to satisfy that desire. The Shastras also have acted on that principle, e.g., they have enjoined the Brahmins to teach religion, and at the same time have allowed them the privilege of begging for alms. Then he goes on to say: "The religious principle requires that the debit

<sup>9</sup> Gandhiji's attitude towards Economics is briefly this: either he will have no Economics at all, or if such a science is to be tolerated, its principles must not clash with those of religion, i.e., it should be spiritualized.

<sup>10</sup> The spiritualized type of Economics supported by Mahatma Gandhi will not allow the owning of slaves, cattle or machinery.—"Personally I think there is no room in economics which is convertible with religion, for the owning of slaves, whether they are human beings, cattle or machinery" (*Young India*, 1927, p. 312).



and credit sides of one's balance-sheet should be perfectly square. That is also *the truest economics and therefore true religion*. Whenever there is any discrepancy between these, it spells bad economics, and makes for unrighteousness. . . . But the majority of mankind do not understand this use of economics to subserve religion; they want it only for amassing 'profits' for themselves. Humanitarian economics, on the other hand, for which I stand, rules out profits altogether. But it rules out 'deficit' no less, for the simple reason that it is utterly impossible to safeguard a religious institution by following a policy of dead loss." (*Italics are ours*). It appears that Mahatma Gandhi is opposed to the accumulation of profits and he is also opposed to what ordinarily goes under the name of Economics, because it is a branch of learning utilised for amassing profits.

#### CITIES CONDEMNED

Mahatma Gandhi's attitude towards cities may be compressed within three brief points: (1) that city-life is worse than village life, (2) that wealth is created in the villages and the cities fatten only by sucking their life-blood, and (3) that Indian civilization is primarily a rural, while Western civilization is primarily an urban one. Some passages are quoted here in support of these points:

"They (our forefathers) reasoned that large cities were a snare and a useless encumbrance, and that people would not be happy in them, that there would be gangs of thieves and robbers, prostitution and vice flourishing in them, and that poor men would be robbed by rich men" (*Indian Home Rule*, p. 65).

"By instinct and habit we are used to village life, where need for corporate sanitation is not felt. But as the Western civilisation is materialistic and tends towards the development of the cities to the neglect of villages the people of the West have evolved a science of corporate sanitation and hygiene from

which we have much to learn" (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, p. 450).

"The half a dozen modern cities are an excrescence and serve at the present moment the evil purpose of drinking the life-blood of the villages. Khaddar is an attempt to revise and reverse the process and establish a better relationship between the cities and the villages. The cities with their insolent torts are a constant menace to the life and liberty of the villagers" (*Young India*, 1927, p. 86).

"These railway lines running north to south and east to west are arteries which drain away the wealth of the masses. . . We in the cities become partners in the blood-sucking process" (*Young India*, 1927, p. 350).<sup>11</sup>

#### THE PRINCIPLE OF SWADESHI

By Swadeshi Mahatma Gandhi understands the duty of preserving the indigenous institutions and using indigenous products. It has three principal aspects—religious, political and economic. Taken in all these aspects together it means that we should not give up our civilization, religion, language, dress, political and economic institutions and the products of our country. It does not mean that we should treasure our faults and defects. But it means that we should cling to our institutions and products, even though they be disagreeable and uncomfortable. The observance of the principle in all its aspects is stressed as a religious duty.

In its economic aspect particularly, it is made to mean that we should use the things which are or can be made in our country in preference to those made in foreign countries. "The broad definition of Swadeshi is the use of all home-made things to the exclusion of foreign things, in so far as such use is necessary for the protection of home industry, more especially those industries without which India will become pauperised" (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, p. 797).

<sup>11</sup> Italics in all the passages quoted here are ours.

Does it then mean that he wants that all imports should totally cease? As is evident from the definition given above, the reply should be in the negative. While he is not exactly in favour of a total cessation of imports, he certainly wants that they should be reduced as much as possible. He would be prepared to allow only those things to be imported which are absolutely essential, but which cannot be produced within the country. While delivering a speech at Madras in 1916 he said: "A Swadeshist will learn to do without hundreds of things which to-day he considers necessary. . . . And we would be making for the goal even if we confined Swadeshi to a given set of articles allowing ourselves as a temporary measure to use such articles as might not be procurable in the country" (*Speeches and Writings*, p. 248). In the same speech he said a little earlier: "If not an article of commerce had been bought from outside India, she would be to-day a land flowing with milk and honey" (p. 246). Imports, therefore, in his opinion constitute a drain on the country's resources, and the more they are reduced the wealthier will India be.<sup>12</sup>

Of all the various items in our import list, cloth is the most important. Besides, by promoting hand-spinning and hand-weaving, Swadeshi is immediately practicable with regard to cloth. Further, Khadi is the only item of Swadeshi in which the masses can universally participate. These reasons abundantly explain the stress laid on Khadi in connection with the prosecution of the Swadeshi programme. Khadi being the

best concrete embodiment of the Swadeshi principle, Mahatma Gandhi is in favour of repeating the term Khadi in preference to that of Swadeshi.

#### MAHATMA GANDHI'S ECONOMIC IDEAL

Even a casual study of Mahatma Gandhi's speeches and writings on economic problems would reveal that the conception of a certain economic ideal being at the back of his mind, always influences his attitude towards the nature of the solution suggested for the cure of existing economic evils. If we were to form a conception of that ideal, what are the factors that must be mentioned as forming parts of it?

The most important of these factors, culled from his speeches and writings, are briefly the following:

(1) The primary wants (those for food, clothing and shelter) of every human being in the world must be satisfied (*Young India*, 1928, p. 381); without the satisfaction of the primary wants no man can possibly make any spiritual progress;<sup>13</sup>

(2) The satisfaction of needs other than those for food, clothing and shelter will hamper spiritual progress, and hence is not necessary;

(3) Every person should produce his own food and clothing (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, p. 1001);

(4) Every home, every village and every country should, as far as possible, be self-supporting (economically independent);

(5) Food and clothing should cease to become articles of commerce;<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> In 1916, Mahatma Gandhi was almost totally opposed to imports of all kinds. At present his attitude has undergone a slight modification. He is not opposed to all imports as such, but is opposed to the importation of those commodities only which can be produced within the country. (*Vide Young India*, 1928, p. 382).

What is Mahatma's attitude towards exports? This is evident from the following passage: "In my opinion no large industry is good that depends on the custom of a foreign country" (*Young India*, 1927, p. 192).

<sup>13</sup> See lecture on *Economic Progress vs. Moral Progress* in Mahatma Gandhi's *Speeches and Writings*, G. A. Natesan & Co.

<sup>14</sup> "These (food and clothing) should be freely available to all as God's air and water are, or ought to be; they should not be made a vehicle of traffic for the exploitation of others. Their monopolization by any country, nation or group of persons would be unjust. The neglect of this simple principle is the cause of the destitution that we witness to-day, not only in this unhappy land, but other parts of the world too" (*Young India*, 1928, p. 381).

(6) Large-scale industries, if they at all exist, should be nationalised;

(7) Some machineries may be tolerated, only if certain conditions are satisfied; the rejection of all machineries should, however, be kept in view as the ultimate ideal;

(8) Trade in wine, opium, etc., is to be prohibited;

(9) The movement of population from one country to another is not desirable;

(10) It may not be possible to totally remove all inequalities in respect of wealth; the relations between the rich and the poor should be those of 'per-

fect friendship.' The rich shall not try to enrich themselves at the expense of the poor;<sup>15</sup>

(11) The habit of giving alms is to be discouraged. The principle of 'No labour, no meal' should be established. Beggary should cease to be a profession (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, pp. 1802-3);

(12) Every man should undergo some physical labour (a) to realize the dignity of labour and (b) to remove the degradation of the manual labourers in social estimation.

## THE PILGRIM OF INDIA\*

BY ROMAIN ROLLAND

After the night of Christmas 1886, that mystic vigil of Antpore, where amid tears of love was founded in memory of the lost Master, the New Communion of Apostles,—many months and years went by before the work, which was to make the thought of Ramakrishna pass into living action, was begun.

<sup>15</sup> I cannot picture to myself a time when no man shall be richer than another. But I do picture to myself a time when the rich will spurn to enrich themselves at the expense of the poor and the poor will cease to envy the rich. Even in a most perfect world, we shall fail to avoid inequalities, but we can and must avoid strife and bitterness. There are numerous examples extant of the rich and the poor living in perfect friendliness. We have but to multiply such instances" (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, p. 1188).

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<sup>1</sup> I would remind the reader that his real name was Narendranath Dutt. He did not take that of Vivekananda until the moment of his departure for America in 1893.

I have asked the Ramakrishna Mission about this subject. Swami Ashokananda has been good enough to put at my disposal all the results of a profound research. According to the decisive witness of one of the most important monastic disciples of Vivekananda,

The bridge had to be built. And they had not made up their minds to do it. The only one who had the energy and the constructive genius for it,—Naren—<sup>1</sup> himself hesitated. He was like them all, and more than all, uncertain, torn between dream and action. And before

the Swami Suddhananda, the present Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission, Ramakrishna always called him by his name of Narendra, or more shortly, Naren. Although he had made Sannyāsins of certain of his disciples it was never under the usual forms and he never gave them monastic names. He had indeed given to Naren the cognomen, *Kamalāksha* (Lotus-eyed); but Naren dropped it immediately. During his first journeys through India he presented himself under different names, so as to conceal his identity. Sometimes he was the Swami VIVIDISHANANDA, sometimes Satchidananda. Again on the eve of his departure for America, when he went to see Colonel Olcott, then President of the Theosophical Society, to get letters of introduction from him in America, it was under the name of Satchidananda that Colonel Olcott knew him, and instead of recommending him to his friends in America he warned them against him. It was his great friend, the Maharaja of Khetri, who suggested the name Vivekananda to him when he was about to leave for America. The choice of the name had been inspired by an allusion to the "power of discrimination" possessed by the Swami. Naren accepted it, perhaps provisionally. But it was never possible for

raising the arch which would span the two banks, he needed to know and explore the *other bank*,—the real India and the world of to-day. But nothing as yet was clear: the coming mission burnt dimly in the feverish heart of the young man of destiny, still only twenty-three. The task was so heavy, so vast, so complex! How could it be accomplished even in spirit? And when and where should it be begun? He put away in anguish the moment to decide. But could he prevent its impassioned discussion in the secret depths of his mind? It followed him, each night since his adolescence,—not through his ideas, but through the ardent and conflicting instincts of his nature, through the craving of desires;—desire to have, to conquer, to dominate the earth, the desire to renounce all earthly things to have God.

The struggle was renewed throughout his life. Everything was essential to this warrior, this conqueror: God and the world. To dominate everything. To renounce everything. The excess of forces striving with his Roman athletic body and *Imperator* brain strove for mastery. But his excess of powers, his torrential waters could find no bed large enough to contain them save that of the river of God—the total surrender to the Unity. How would the fight of pride and imperious love, of his great desires, rival and sovereign brothers, be decided?

There was a third element, which Naren had not foreseen, which only the prophetic eye of Ramakrishna had seen from afar. At the moment when the others showed their anxiety or their mistrust of this young man, in whom such tumultuous forces were striving, the Master had declared:

“One day when Naren comes into contact with suffering, with misery, the pride of his character will melt into a mood of infinite compassion. His strong faith in himself will be the instrument to re-establish confidence and faith lost

by discouraged souls. And his free conduct, founded on a powerful mastery over himself, will shine brightly in the eyes of others, like a manifestation of the true liberty of the Ego.”

This meeting with suffering and human misery—not just vague and general—but definite misery, misery close at hand, the misery of his people, the misery of India—was to be the great shock, from the flint of which would fly the spark to set the whole soul on fire. And on this foundation-stone in this mission of Human Service, pride, ambition and love, faith, science and action, all his forces, all his desires were thrown, were joined together, mingled their flames into a single one: “A Religion which gives us faith in ourselves, respect for the nation, the power to nourish the starving, to conquer misery, to raise the masses. If you wish to find God, serve man!”<sup>2</sup>

But this consciousness of his mission only came to him and seized him after years of direct experience, wherein he had seen with his eyes, and touched with his hands the miserable and glorious body of humanity—his mother India in her tragic nakedness.

The first months, the first year of Baranagore, were devoted to the mutual edification of the disciples. No one of them was disposed to preach to men. It was necessary for them to concentrate on the search for mystic realisation; and the delights of the inner life made them turn away their eyes from the outside. Naren, who shared their longing for the Infinite, but who realised the danger for the passive soul from this elementary attraction, which acts like gravity on a falling stone—Naren, with whom even dream was action, would not permit the torpid engulfing in meditation. He made of this period of conventual seclusion a hive of laborious intelligence, a High School of the spirit. The superiority of his genius and his knowledge had from the first given him a tacit but vigorous

him to change it, if he had wanted to: for in several months the name acquired an Indo-American celebrity.

<sup>2</sup>*The Life of Vivekananda*, Vol. II. Chapter LXXIII. Conversations before 1898.

direction over his companions, although many of them were older than he. The last words of the Master when he was taking leave of them, had they not been to Naren :

"Take care of these boys !" . . . .

Naren resolutely took in hand the conduct of this young seminary, and did not allow it to indulge in the idleness of God. He kept them on the alert, he harried their minds mercilessly ; he read them the great books of human thought, he explained to them the evolution of the universal mind, he forced them to dry and impassioned discussion on all the great philosophical and religious problems, he led them indefatigably towards the wide horizons of boundless Truth, which surpass the bounds of schools and races, which embrace and unify all particular truths.

This synthesis of spirit achieved the promise of the message of love of Ramakrishna. The unseen Master presided at their meetings. They were able to put their intellectual labours under the devotion of his universal heart.

But the nature of the Indian religious is not (although Europe believes in Asiatic immobility) to remain, like the French bourgeois, confined within the same place. Even the contemplators have in their blood the secular instinct of wandering over the face of the universe, without a fixed abode, without attachments, everywhere independent and everywhere stranger. This tendency of becoming a wandering monk, which in Hindu religious life has a special name, that of *Parivrājaka*, did not delay in making its spur felt among the brethren of Baranagore. From the moment of their union the whole group had never assembled in its entirety. Two of the chiefs, Yogananda and Latu, were not present at the consecration of Christmas, 1886. They had followed Ramakrishna's widow to Brindaban. Others, like the young Sarada, had suddenly disappeared, without saying where they were going. Naren, who was watchful to maintain the bands uniting the brotherhood, was himself tormented

with the same desire to escape. How could this migratory need of the soul, this longing to lose itself in the Ocean of the air, like a carrier pigeon that stifles beneath the roof of the dove-cote, be reconciled to the necessary fixity of a naissant order ? It was arranged that at least a portion of the group should always remain at Baranagore, while the other brethren followed the "Call of the Forest." And one of them—one only—Sasi never quitted the hearth. He was the faithful guardian of the Math, the immobile axis, the coping stone of the dove-cote, to which the vagabond wings returned.<sup>3</sup>

Naren resisted the call to flight for two years. Apart from short visits he remained at Baranagore until 1888. Then he left suddenly, but not alone at first—with one companion ; and so intense though his desire to escape was, for two years and a half he always came back recalled by his brethren, or by some unforeseen event. Then he was seized by the sacred madness of evasion ; the desire suppressed for five years burst all bounds. And in 1891, alone, without a companion, without a name, staff and bowl in his hand like an unknown beggar, he was engulfed for years in the immensity of India.

But a hidden logic directed this distracted course. The immortal words : "Thou wouldst not have looked for Me, if thou hadst not found Me"<sup>4</sup> were never

"I have said above that the free Ramakrishna, differing in this from other Gurus, had not proceeded in the case of his disciples, (this was later made a subject of reproach to Vivekananda) in the ceremony of initiation, with the usual forms. Naren and his companions supplemented it themselves by proceeding about 1888 or 1889 to the Virajâ Homa, the traditional ceremony of Sannyâsa at the monastery of Baranagore. Swami Ashokananda has also written to me that another kind of Sannyâsa is recognised in India, as superior to the formal Sannyâsa consecrated by use. He who feels a strong detachment from life and an intense thirst for God, can take the Sannyâsa alone, even without any formal initiation. This was doubtless the case with the free monks of Baranagore.

<sup>3</sup>Pascal.

so true as for those souls possessed by the hidden God, who struggle with Him so as to drag from Him the secret of the mission with which they are charged.

Naren had no doubt that there was a mission for him : his power, his genius spoke in him, and the fever of the age, the misery of the time, and the mute appeal that arose around him from oppressed India, the tragic contrast between the august grandeur of her ancient land, of her unfulfilled destiny, and the degradation of the country, betrayed by her children, the anguish of death and resurrection, of despair and love devoured his heart. But what was to be his mission? Who was to dictate it to him? The holy Master was dead, without having defined it for him. And among the living, who then was capable of enlightening his path? God alone. Let Him speak. Why was He silent? Why did He refuse to reply?

Naren went to find Him.

The great Periplus of two years round India, then of three years round the world (had he intended to do precisely this from the first?) was the adequate response of his instinct to the double exigencies of his nature : independence and service. He wandered, free of all order, of all caste, of all home, alone with God perpetually. And there was no single hour of his life, that did not bring him into contact with the sorrows, the desires, the abuses, the misery and all the fever of living men, rich and poor, in town and field; he espoused their existence; the great Book of Life revealed to him what all the books in the libraries could not have done (for they are only collections) and that which even the ardent love of Ramakrishna had only been able to see dimly in dream :—the tragic face of the present day,—the God who struggles in humanity—the cry for help of the peoples of India and of the world—and the heroic duty of the new Oedipus, whose task is to deliver Thebes from the talons of the Sphinx, or perish with Thebes.

*Wanderjahre. Lehrjahre.*<sup>5</sup> Unique education ! . . He was not only the humble little brother, who slept in stables or on the pallets of beggars. He was on the same footing with everybody. To-day an insulted beggar sheltered by pariahs. To-morrow the guest of princes, conversing on equal terms with prime ministers and Maharajas. The brother of the oppressed, leaning over their misery. Sounding the luxury of the great, awakening in their torpid hearts care for the public weal. Controlling as closely the science of the pandits as the problems of industrial and rural economy, which governed the life of the people. Teaching, learning. And step by step making himself the Conscience of India, its Unity and its Destiny. They were incarnate in him. And the world saw them in Vivekananda.

His itinerary led him through Rajputana, Alwar (February to March, 1891, Jaipur, Ajmere, Khatri, Ahmedabad and Kathiawar (end of September), Junagad and Gujerat, Porbandar (a stay of eight to nine months), Dvaraka, Palitana, the city of temples close to the gulf of Kambay, the state of Baroda, Khandwa, Bombay, Poona, Belgaum, (October, 1892), Bangalore in the state of Mysore, Cochin, Malabar, the state of Travancore, Trivandrum, Madura. . . . He travelled to the extreme point of the immense pyramid, Cape Comorin, where is the Benares of Southern India, Rameswaram, the Rome of the Ramayana, and beyond to Kanyakumari, the sanctuary of the Great Goddess (end of 1892).

From the North to the South the ancient land of India was full of gods; and the unbroken chain of their innumerable arms made only one God. He realised the unity of flesh and spirit in them. He realised it also in communion with the living of all castes and outcasts. And he taught them to realise it. He took mutual understanding from the one to the other,—to

“Years of travel.” “Years of apprenticeship.” (Goethe.)

strong spirits, to the intellectuals obsessed with the abstract, respect for images, idol-Gods,—to young men the duty to study the grand old books of the past : the Vedas, the Purānas, the ancient annals, and still more the people of to-day—to all, a religious love of mother India and passion to dedicate themselves to her redemption.

He took no less than he gave. His vast mind never for a single day failed to enlarge its knowledge,<sup>6</sup> its experience, and it espoused all the rivers of thought which were scattered and buried in the Indian soil, and whose source seemed to him to be identical. As far from the blind devotion of the orthodox, who engulfed themselves in the muddy odour of stagnant waters, as from the blind rationalism of the reformers of the Brahmo Samāj, who with the best intentions, busied themselves with drying up the mystic fountains of hidden energy, he wished to preserve everything, to harmonise, by draining the whole entangled reservoir of the waters of a whole continent possessed by a deeply religious soul.

He wished more : (nobody is with impunity the contemporary of the great engineers who cut a passage between the seas, and willy nilly, rejoin the hands of the continents!)—he carried everywhere *The Imitation of Jesus Christ*, and with the *Bhagavad Gītā*, he spread the thought of Christ.<sup>7</sup> He urged young people to study the science of the West.

But the enlargement of his thought was not exercised only in the realm of ideas. A revolution took place in his moral vision of other men and in his

relations with them. If ever there was pride in a young man, intellectual intolerance, contempt of the aristocrat for all that fell from his high ideal of purity, it was there in the young Narendra :

“At the age of twenty (it is he himself speaking) I was a fanatic, devoid of sympathy, incapable of the least concession, I did not even wish to walk on the pavement beside the theatre in the streets of Calcutta.”

During the first months of his pilgrimage at the Maharaja of Khetri's near Jaipur, (April 1891) a little dancer gave him unwittingly a lesson in humility. When she appeared the scornful monk rose to go out. The prince begged him to remain. The little dancer sang :

“O Lord, do not consider my bad qualities ! Thy name, O Lord, is Identity. Make of us both the same Brahman ! One piece of iron is in the statue of the temple. Another is the knife in the hand of the butcher. When they touch the philosopher's stone they both turn into gold. So Lord, do not consider my bad qualities ! Thy name, Lord, is Identity ! . . . . .

“One drop of water is from the sacred Jumna. Another is in the dirty ditch by the side of the road. When they fall into the Ganges both become holy. So, Lord, do not consider my bad qualities. Thy name, Lord, is Identity

Naren was overwhelmed. The confident faith of the humble song penetrated him for life. Many years afterwards he recalled it with emotion.

One by one his prejudices fell—even those which he had thought to be most deeply rooted. In the Himalayas he lived among the Thibetan races, who practise polyandry. He was the guest of a family of six brothers, who shared the same wife ; and in his neophytic zeal he began to show them their immorality. But it was they who were scandalised by his lessons. “What egoism !” they said. “To wish to keep a woman all to oneself ! . . . .”—Truth at the bottom of the mountains. Error at the top : . . . He saw the relativity

<sup>6</sup>At Khetri he made himself the pupil of the foremost Sanskrit grammarian of the time. At Ahmedabad he completed his knowledge of Mohammedan and Jain culture. At Porbandar he stayed three quarters of a year, in spite of his vow of a wandering monk, to perfect with pandit savants, his philosophical and Sanskrit studies; he worked with a court Pandit, who translated the Vedas.

<sup>7</sup>But he did not spare the intolerance of the missionaries; and further he never forgave them for it. The Christ whom he preached opened his arms to all.

of virtue—at least of those virtues having the greatest traditional sanction. And a transcendental irony, as in the case of Pascal, taught him to enlarge his moral conception in judging of good and evil in a race or an age, according to the standards of that race or that age.

Again he kept company with the thieves of the most degraded caste, and recognised in the thieves of the high road "Sinners who were potential saints." Everywhere he shared the privations and the insults of the oppressed classes. In Central India he lived with a family of outcast sweepers. He discovered spiritual treasures among this low people, who cower at the feet of society; and their misery choked him. He could not turn away from it. He sobbed:

"O my country! O my country!  
....."

when he learnt from the papers that a man had died of hunger at Calcutta. He asked himself as he smote his chest:

"What have we done, we so-called men of God, the Sannyâsins, what have we done for the masses?"

He recalled the rough words of Rama-krishna:

"Religion is not for empty stomachs." And becoming impatient with the intellectual speculations of an egoistic faith, he made it the first duty of religion "to care for the poor and raise them." He imposed the duty on the rich, on officials, and on princes:

"Cannot each one of you give one life for the love of others? The reading of the Vedânta, the exercise of meditation, leave them, reserve them for a future life! Let this body of today be consecrated to the service of others! And then I shall know that you have not come to me in vain."

He met a thief who had plundered Pavhari Baba, and then touched with repentance had become a monk.

"The notation of these words belongs to a later date. But the sentiment that inspired

On a future day his pathetic voice was to sound this sublime cry:

"May I be born and reborn again and suffer a thousand miseries provided I can adore and serve the only God which exists, the sum total of all souls, and above all, my God the miserable, my God the poor of all races! . . . ."

At this date, 1892, it was the misery at hand, that of India, which filled his mind, obstructing every other. It pursued him, like a tiger after its prey, from the North to the South in his flight across India. It consumed his nights with insomnia. At Cape Comorin he was caught; it had him in its jaws. This time he abandoned his body and soul to it. He vowed his life to the unhappy masses.

But how could he help them? He had no money and time was pressing. Moreover no princely gifts of one or two Maharajas or offerings of several groups of well-wishers could nourish a thousandth part of the most urgent needs.

Before India woke up from her ataraxy and organised herself for the common good, the ruin of India would be consummated. He turned his eyes to the ocean, to the other side of the seas. He must address himself to the whole world. The whole world had need of India. The health of India, the death of India was its own concern. Could her immense spiritual reserves be allowed to be destroyed as so many others, Egypt and Chaldæa, which a long time afterwards men struggled to exhume when nothing was left of them but débris, their soul being dead for ever? . . . . The appeal of India to Europe and to America began to take shape in the mind of the solitary. It was at the end of 1891 between Junagad and Porbandar that he seems to have thought of it for the first time. At Porbandar, where he began to learn French, a pandit advised him to go to the West, where his thought would be better understood than in his own



"Go and take it by storm and then come back!"

At Khandwa at the beginning of the autumn of 1892 he heard mention of a Parliament of Religions to be held the next year at Chicago, and the first idea that arose in his mind was to take part in it. At the same time he forbade himself to attempt anything for the realisation of this project and he refused subscriptions to help it, until he had achieved his vow of the great pilgrimage round India. At Bangalore towards the end of October he declared clearly to the Maharaja his intention of going to ask the West "for the means to ameliorate the material situation of India," and to take it in exchange the Gospel of the Vedânta. At the end of 1892 he had made up his mind.

At that date he found himself at the extreme limit of India, at the extreme meridian where Hanuman the monkey-god made his fabulous jump. He, who was a man like us and who could not use the path of a demi-god, had traversed the immense land of India upon the soles of his feet. His body throughout two years had known all the way the contact of its great body; he had to suffer from hunger, from thirst, from murderous nature, and the insults of men; he arrived enfeebled. And at Cape Comorin he had not the money to pay for the boat to take him to the end of his pilgrimage: he flung himself into the sea, and swam in the midst of sharks . . . . He arrived at last and then, turning back as from the top of a mountain he embraced the whole of India through which he had just travelled, and the world of thoughts which had besieged him during his long wanderings. For two years he had lived as in a seething cauldron, consumed with fever; he had carried "a soul on fire," he was a "tempest."<sup>10</sup> Like criminals who formerly suffered the torture of water, he felt himself submerged by the torrents of energy he had accumulated;

the walls of his being were given way . . . .<sup>11</sup> And when he stopped on the terrace of the tower he had just climbed, at the very edge of the earth with the panorama of the world spread before his eyes, the blood pounded in his ears like the sea at his feet; he almost fell. It was the supreme assault of the gods striving within him. When the struggle was over, the first battle was won. He had seen the path which he was to follow. His mission was chosen.

He recovered the continent of India by swimming. On the opposite coast he went towards the North. On foot by Ramnad and Pondicherry he came to Madras. And there in the first weeks of 1893, he publicly proclaimed his desire to conduct a Mission in the West.<sup>12</sup> His name without any wish of his own was already spread abroad; in this intelligent and vital city of Madras, where he stayed twice, he was besieged by visitors, and he found his first group of devoted disciples, who dedicated themselves to him and who never abandoned him. When he had left they continued to support him with their letters and their faith; and he, from far countries kept his direction over them. His burning love for India awakened passionate echoes in them. And their enthusiasm increased the power of his conviction tenfold. He spoke against the search for personal salvation. It was rather public salvation that ought to be sought, the regeneration of the mother-country, the resurrection of the spiritual powers of India and their diffusion over the universe . . . . .

"The time is ripe. The faith of the Rishis must become dynamic. It must come forth from itself."

Nawabs, bankers offered him money for the voyage overseas. He refused it.

<sup>11</sup>"I feel a mighty power! It is as if I were about to blaze forth. There are so many powers in me! It seems to me as if I could revolutionise the world."

<sup>12</sup>This was the title of a lecture he gave at Hyderabad in February, 1893: *My Mission to the West*.

<sup>10</sup>It was Abhedananda, who, meeting him in October, 1893, in the state of Baroda described him thus.

He asked his disciples who were collecting subscriptions to appeal rather to the middle classes : for

"I am going for the people and the poor."

As he had done at the beginning of his pilgrimage he asked the blessing of the Holy Mother for the distant journey. And she sent him Ramakrishna's, who had delivered it to her in a dream for the beloved disciple.

It does not seem that he had written to his spiritual brethren at Baranagore. But chance wished that almost on the eve of his departure at Mt. Abu station, near Bombay, he met two of them, Brahmananda and Turiyananda; and he told them with pathetic passion, whose percussions reached Baranagore, of the imperious call of suffering India which forced him to go :

"I have travelled throughout India, and it has been torture for me to see the poverty and the terrible misery of the masses. I could not restrain my tears. It is at present my firm conviction that it is useless to preach religion to the miserable without helping their poverty and their sufferings. It is for this reason, to save the poor of India that I am going to America."

He went to Khetri, where his friend the Maharaja gave him his Dewan (Prime Minister) to escort him to Bombay, where he embarked. At the moment of departure he clothed himself, at the same time as with the robe of red silk and ochre turban, with the name of Vivekananda, which he was about to impose on the world.

## KARMA YOGA : ITS SIGNIFICANCE AND PRESENT APPLICATION

[WITH A COMPARATIVE VIEW OF SAMKARA AND SWAMI VIVEKANANDA]

BY SWAMI SATPRAKASHANANDA

### I

*Karma Yoga* has been very aptly called the secret of work. For, *Karma* which binds us to the infinite rounds of births and rebirths, leads to Bliss supreme when done in the spirit of *Yoga* or perfect equanimity. It reconciles the conflicting calls of social and secluded life and leaves us free to pursue the practical course. It combines in a single process the inner and the outer growth and widens the scope of spiritual pursuit. It does not confine spirituality within the walls of a cell, cloister or temple but installs it even in the open market place. By spiritualising the common deeds of life, *Karma Yoga* does away with the so-called distinctions of secular and spiritual life. It makes the spiritual world accessible to men of all ranks and positions. From the monopolised treasure of a few, it makes religion a common property.

By endowing *Karma* with a spiritual outlook *Karma Yoga* teaches us efficiency in work. It does not consider the kind of work but the spirit in which the work is done. The meanest work done in right earnest produces the greatest good. Having no ulterior motive, the *Karma Yogi* can devote his sole attention to the work itself. He is unconcerned with the pleasures and pains entailing on the work. But this does not involve any indifference to work as we are prone to think. A *Karma Yogi* does his work neither mechanically nor in a mood of abstraction but with full devotion and attention. As he directs his whole mind to whatever work he takes up, he learns the secret of detachment. He is never engrossed with things that do not concern him at the time. The great difficulty in practical life is preoccupation. The powers of attachment and detachment which are the key to all excellence in life, are the *sine qua non* of *Karma*

*Yoga*. There is another obstructive element in active life which too does not affect a *Karma Yogi*. Being free from personal considerations, the consciousness of being at work creates no adverse feeling in him. He does not think much of the work done nor does he look awry at the work to be done. Personal considerations are a great impediment to the progress of work and tire us sooner than work itself.

*Karma Yoga* has often been defined as unselfish work. But though *Karma Yoga* implies unselfish work, all unselfish work is not necessarily *Karma Yoga*. We live in the world with the avowed object to secure pleasure and avoid pain. There are people who seek happiness even at the expense of others. There are some who endeavour to make themselves happy, but refrain from doing harm to any one. Some, again, while looking after their own well-being, try to help their fellow beings at the same time. Then, there are a few others who do not care for their own joys and sorrows, but delight in doing good to people at large. There have been many scientists and philanthropists who have sacrificed even their lives for the betterment of the world. Are they entitled to be called *Karma Yogis*?

One essential condition of *Karma Yoga* is that work should be done without any desire of fruit. It should leave out of consideration any hope of return here or hereafter. Whatever is done with a motive, leaves an impression (*Samskāra*) on the mind: good work good impression, bad work bad. These cause rebirths and fructify as happiness and misery in new incarnations. Both good and bad are bondages of the soul. They make the soul pass from birth to death and death to birth. They are inevitably associated with one another. One cannot exist without the other. No good work is possible without causing harm in some quarter or other. There is no pleasure but is followed by pain. So in order to be free we must go beyond both good and evil.

Can we not give up work altogether and escape both? No, that is not possible. We cannot live without work. Our very nature compels us to act. Our very existence requires it. We may strike work externally, but our mind will be dwelling on the objects of desire. Such a man is called *mithyā-chāra*, hypocrite. One cannot stop work by force. Reaction is bound to come. Therefore, we have to work, and work in such a way that it may not create any bondage, i.e., we should work without any desire of fruits. So any new *Samskāras* will not be created and the old *Samskāras* also will be gradually eradicated.

To be a *Karma Yogi* a man should first realise the dual character of things. The relativity of good and evil is to be apprehended by him not as a theory but as a fact of deepest concern. He should feel its iron grip and strive to make his escape. This is the first awakening of spiritual consciousness. This demarcates the life spiritual from the worldly life. In fact, *Karma Yoga* is not simply a moral discipline, but a spiritual practice. To a *Karma Yogi* the world appears as a mass of contradiction, made up of so many pairs of opposites, such as, birth and death, growth and decay, heat and cold, pleasure and pain, love and hatred, good and bad. He to whom the mystery of duality is not revealed, who does not face it boldly, is not resolved to get over the dual throng, may work for the benefit of mankind even at personal risk, but he is not a *Karma Yogi*. The crucial point is: Does he find the world evanescent? Does he feel that the truth is beyond all phenomena? That is to say, has he a spiritual outlook? Unless he has this, he may be unselfish in a sense, but he is no *Karma Yogi*. All *Yogas*, *Karma* not excepted, implies a hankering for the realisation of the Eternal Truth. Devoid of this hankering, none can be a *Yogi*. And indeed, until we feel the transitoriness and the insubstantiality of the pheno-

menal existence, we cannot yearn for the Eternal.

Thus there are two kinds of unselfishness, two spirits in which good can be done to the world. The one is of the kind we usually know, which is without any spiritual background or realisation of the falsity of life and the world. The other is the spontaneous outcome of such realisation. This is the unselfishness of *Karma Yoga*.

It should not be supposed that because a *Karma Yogi* does not care for the result of action for himself, he works without any consideration of good and evil. A *Karma Yogi* gives up all attachment to the fruits of work, as he knows that to be the binding element in work. This does not indicate that he has not to discriminate between good and bad deeds. He knows that certain acts are good and promote our happiness and certain acts are bad and cause us misery. He finds evil in both.) But he is not blind to their relative worth. As he has to work, he must choose the good work. There is another reason why a *Karma Yogi* cannot work indiscriminately. It is selfishness which impels us to wrong deeds. No one will harm others unselfishly. A *Karma Yogi*, having no selfish motive, cannot do misdeeds. His very nature directs him to the right path.) We can practise *Karma Yoga* only at a certain stage of moral development. He alone, who has done sufficient good work in this and previous lives and have had plenty of enjoyments in consequence, can come to realise the futility of pleasure. Only those in whom good tendencies prevail, whose bad *Samskāras* are completely overpowered by the good ones, can be prepared to break the delusion of duality. So a *Karma Yogi* is naturally inclined to do good work. But though a *Karma Yogi* does what is good for others, his mind is not set upon the result of his deeds. As soon as the work is chosen, his whole mind is centred upon its performance. To do good work is indeed a blessing in itself. Success or failure he does not mind.

Thus we see *Karma Yoga* does not mark the beginning of active life. Certain preparation is necessary for it. Many of us read the *Geetā*, find *Karma Yoga* to be the secret of work, and at once try to adopt it. The attempt results mostly in failure or pretension. This is why many of us have to undergo lifelong internal conflict and can make neither temporal nor spiritual progress. As a matter of fact, we cannot be free from desire, unless we first work with desire. So long as we hanker after pleasures, we must work with a view to secure them. We cannot discard them before we taste them and realise their bitterness. This is why the seekers of material enjoyments have been instructed to perform *Kāmya Karma* (work which brings forth desired-for objects) as enjoined by the *Shāstras*. Even the *Geetā* approves of them while appraising *Niskāma Karma* : "The *Prajāpati* having in the beginning created mankind together with *Yajna*, said : 'By this shall ye multiply; this shall be the milch cow of your desires. Cherish the *Devas* with this, and may those *Devas* cherish you : thus cherishing one another, ye shall gain the highest good. The *Devas* cherished by *Yajna*, will give you desired-for objects.' So, he who enjoys objects given by the *Devas* without offering (in return) to them, is verily a thief." (Chap. III, 10-12.) Certainly work with motive is better than no work or pretence of non-attachment.

Before the *Karma Yogi* can be free from the desire of fruits of actions, he has to renounce his claim as the doer of action. The one is inevitably connected with the other. The ego as doer turns the ego as enjoyer. A *Karma Yogi* must have no idea of "actorness" in him. He should be entirely free from egoistic spirit. There should not be any feeling of vanity or dejection in him for doing a deed however great or humble. Impersonality is an essential characteristic of a *Karma Yogi*. Even the pleasure derived from the consciousness of per-

forming a good deed does not affect him any way.

The well-known maxim, duty for duty's sake, as it is commonly understood, does not represent *Karma Yoga*. Here also the same difference as we noted between merely unselfish action and *Karma Yoga*, has to be recognised. Unless there is a spiritual background, the sense of duty is merely a form of bondage. But with it, it may become transformed into *Karma Yoga*. Oftentimes our lack of the transcendental outlook makes us glorify our ignorant life and the life of bondage as something absolute and obligatory. We continue with our degraded life and consider ourselves as performing duty for duty's sake.

## II

*Karma Yoga* is the common basis of all the other *Yogas* or means of freedom. It is the stepping-stone to the *Yogas* of knowledge, meditation and devotion, known respectively as *Jñāna Yoga*, *Rāja Yoga* and *Bhakti Yoga*. The various attitudes of *Karma Yoga* appropriate to different *Yogas*, have been indicated in the *Geetā* by Sree Krishna, the greatest teacher of *Karma Yoga*. A *Karma Yogi* of *Bhakti* type offers his work to God. Whatever he does, he does for His satisfaction. He does not care for his own happiness or misery. He resigns himself to the will of God and feels himself an instrument in His hands. He has no claim over the deeds or the fruits thereof. As he forsakes all rights over the actions, they do not react on him as merits and demerits. So it is said in the *Geetā*: "He who does actions, offering to *Brahman* (*Isvara*), abandoning attachments, is not tainted by sin as a lotus-leaf is not tainted by water." (Chap. V. 10.) Therefore, Sree Krishna asks Arjuna to dedicate all work to God without any reservation: "Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou offerest in sacrifice, whatever thou givest away, whatever austerity thou

practisest, O son of Kunti, do thou as offering unto Me." (Chap. IX. 27.) The selfsame principle of the dedication of work has been stated in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇam*, the most luminous exposition of the Religion of Devotion. (Vide XI. 2.34.)

A *Karma Yogi* of a psychic disposition, whose ideal of Freedom is the isolation of the Self from *Prakriti* (internal and external nature), maintains an attitude of witness towards work. The Soul is intrinsically apart from *Prakriti* as its onlooker. Body, organs, mind and external objects are the transformations of *Prakriti*. They are the effects of *Gunas*, the primal constituents of *Prakriti*. All activities belong to them, but are falsely ascribed to the Soul. So he who knows himself aloof from *Prakriti* is not affected by the work done. The idea is thus expressed in the *Geetā*: "The *Gunas* of *Prakriti* perform all actions. With the understanding deluded by egoism, a man thinks, 'I am the doer.' But one with true insight into the domains of *Guna* and *Karma*, knowing that *Gunas* as senses merely rest on *Gunas* as objects, does not become attached." (Chap. III. 27, 28.)

A *Karma Yogi* who seeks supreme Bliss through *Jñāna* or the knowledge of the soul's identity with *Brahman*, looks upon all activities as the product of *Ajñāna*, nescience. The Soul is the one Infinite Reality. The entire cosmic order is a false appearance. The external and internal nature with their multifarious forms, properties and functions are superimposed on the Soul through Ignorance. It is changeless and static in Itself. It neither undertakes nor withdraws. Action and inaction are attributed to It through the idea of actorship. He who has no idea of actorship in him, though engaged in action is really inactive. Again, a man may remain inactive, but, if he has the idea of actorship in him, he is active, because he ascribes the withdrawal from action to himself. In the words of the *Geetā*: "He who can see inaction in action,

who can also see action in inaction, he is wise, he is devout, he is the performer of all action." (Chap. IV. 18).

One common feature of the different forms of *Karma Yoga* mentioned above is equanimity. A man may be of such practical spirit that he may not have any marked tendency towards *Jñāna*, *Dhyāna* or *Bhakti*, but if he works with mental equipoise, in spite of failure and success, in spite of sufferings and pleasures, he is a *Karma Yogi*. Equanimity is the *Yoga*, says the *Geetā*. "Being steadfast in *Yoga*, O Dhananjaya, perform actions, abandoning attachment, remaining unconcerned as regards success and failure. This evenness of mind is known as *Yoga*." (Chap. II. 48). This may be regarded as the attitude of a pure *Karma Yogi*. This can be adopted by one who has no theistic faith or philosophic view, but who finds attachment to be a bondage and the root of all miseries, and tries to get rid of it.

It should be noted here that the *Slokas* quoted above represent the ideal states of active life. These attitudes are spontaneous only with the adepts. A *Karma Yogi* endeavours to cultivate them from the beginning. The very ideal is adopted by him as the means. He can attain it only when fully established in the *Yoga* he prepares himself for. Practice is nothing but the gradual realisation of the ideal through effort. Perfection is the ideal fully realised.

The adherents of different *Yogas* hold that *Karma Yoga* is preparatory to other *Yogas* through *Chittashuddhi*, purification of mind. When the mind is purified through *Karma Yoga*, then it is adapted to the practice of other *Yogas*. We have seen that in order to be a *Karma Yogi* a man should first realise the futility of all sense-enjoyments here and hereafter. He should be prepared to go beyond both good and evil, pleasure and pain. He finds that it is the desire of sense-objects within him, that makes him run after them. So he tries to shake off desire. But desire would not leave him all at once.

It is firmly and deeply rooted in him. It clings persistently to his mind. He has to struggle hard and long to get rid of it. He does not seek pleasure as before, yet he has to perform work. Work he must, but at the same time keep constant watch over himself so that no desire of any kind may force itself up in his mind and no egoistic sense may prevail in his consciousness. As he goes on this way, the force of desire grows less and less, and a time comes when it disappears altogether. His mind is no longer swayed by any prospect of enjoyment here or hereafter. This is what is meant by *Chittashuddhi*. This struggle against desire through work is generally regarded as *Karma Yoga* proper. It is in this sense that the *Bhāgavatam* uses the expression '*Karmayogastu Kāminām*' (XI. 20. 6-8), '*Karma Yoga* is for those who have desire.' It does not mean that *Karma Yoga* is to be practised by those who seek more and more enjoyment but by those who want to get free from the desire that they have. The idea is all the more clear in the following utterance of Sree Krishna to Uddhava: "O Uddhava, a man discharging his own duties and performing sacrifices without any desire for results, goes neither to heaven nor to hell, unless he practises otherwise. Such a man, becoming sinless and pure, attains to pure knowledge or perchance devotion to Me,—remaining in this very world." (XI. 20. 10-11).

That *Karma Yoga* is conducive to *Jñāna* and *Bhakti* is clearly stated in the above *Sloka*. It is to be noticed that the *Bhāgavatam* does not mention *Rāja Yoga* here. The practical methods of *Rāja Yoga* are adapted to both *Jñāna Yoga* and *Bhakti Yoga*. So it is often included in either of them. The real difference of these *Yogas* lies in their metaphysical back-grounds. Their practical aspects have some common features in them and cannot be strictly differentiated. *Jñāna Yoga* is based on the *Nirguna* (impersonal) aspect of *Brahman* and *Bhakti Yoga* on the *Saguna*

(personal) aspect. To the *Advaitists* *Brahman* is essentially *Nirguna*; It appears as *Saguna* in association with *Mâyâ*. According to them, *Bhakti* Yoga or the path of *Upâsanâ* (worship of *Saguna Brahman*) is an indirect method of the realisation of *Nirguna*. *Jnâna* Yoga is the only direct method. To the *Vaishnavas* *Saguna* is all in all. *Jiva* and *Prakriti* inhere in it. Though distinct, these have no existence independent of *Isvara* (*Saguna Brahman*). This is not pure dualism. According to the *Vaishnavas*, *Bhakti* is the be-all and end-all of life. *Râja* Yoga is based on the *Sâmkhya* system which affirms *Purusha* (Soul) and *Prakriti* (Nature) as two self-existent realities. Unlike *Sâmkhya*, *Râja* Yoga admits a personal God in the form of a first teacher.

When the aspirant attains purity of mind through *Karma* Yoga subsidiary to *Bhakti* Yoga, he feels a natural longing for God. *Bhakti* is no longer with him a process of thought but a spontaneous outflow of the inmost being. He has now passed out of the stage of ritualistic devotion (*Vaidhi Bhakti*) to that of loving devotion (*Râgânugâ Bhakti*). He gets more and more absorbed in God and betakes himself to contemplation, meditation and discoursing on God. So it is said in the *Bhâgavatam*: "One should perform work, until one has dispassion towards results of work or until one has developed a veneration for listening to tales about Me and the like." (XI. 20. 9.).

Through *Karma* Yoga, an aspirant of *Râja* Yoga acquires the two preliminary requirements of meditative life—*Yama* and *Niyama*. *Yama* means non-killing, truthfulness, non-stealing, continence and non-receiving of gifts. *Niyama* comprises cleanliness, contentment, austerity, study and self-surrender to God. He perceives his aloofness from *Prakriti* and feels not disturbed by its operations. He is now in a fit position to give up external activities and practise concentration. Thus the *Geetâ* says: "For the man of medita-

tion wishing to attain purification of heart leading to concentration, work is said to be the way. For him, when he has attained such (concentration), inaction is said to be the way." (VI. 8).

When a seeker of *Jnâna* attains purity of mind through *Karma* Yoga, he finds himself in possession of the four essential pre-requisites of *Jnâna* Yoga. These are :—(1) the six properties of *Shama* (control of internal organs), *Dama* (control of external organs), *Titikshâ* (endurance), *Uparati* (renunciation), *Shraddhâ* (faith) and *Samâdhâna* (concentration); (2) discrimination between the real and the non-real; (3) dispassion to enjoyment of fruits of action in this and other worlds; and (4) longing for Freedom. He becomes convinced of the infinite purity and blissfulness of Self. His eagerness for Self-realisation is true and intense. Now he has a fitness for renouncing work and cultivating *Jnâna* Yoga, which consists of *Shravana* (hearing about the identity of self with *Brahman*), *Manana* (reflecting on the identity) and *Nididhyâsana* (meditating on the same). That *Karma* paves the way to *Jnâna* has been nicely expressed by Sureswaracharya in his *Naishkarma-siddhi*: "Actions originate an inclination for Self-realisation through mental purification and, their purpose served, they disappear like clouds after the rains." (Sec. 49).

### III

Hence, we see, in spiritual culture *Karma* Yoga invariably precedes the life of contemplation. One is entitled to retire from active life only when he has developed a natural inwardness. As the mind is indrawn, external activities cease of themselves. This does not indicate, however, that after *Chittashuddhi* the aspirant cannot perform work. Of course, when engaged in actual practice of the Yoga he has qualified himself for, he has to abstain from work. Or, if he be so intensely meditative that his spiritual exercises absorb his whole mind and energy, then

he cannot possibly direct any attention either to work for social good or for his own living. At this stage the aspirant has a natural tendency to meditation and reflection and should devote as much attention to their cultivation as possible. So when an aspirant resorts to higher *Yogas* after *Chitta-shuddhi*, he has not necessarily to do work for self-culture. But this does not imply that he should by no means take up work or that his mental disposition does not permit him to do any work. Had it been so, the *Geetâ* would not have commended a sage's actions in such terms as, "so should the wise act desirous of the guidance of the world," (III. 25), "though engaged in action, he does not do anything," (IV. 20), "though acting he is not tainted," (V. 7), "those who worship Me resigning all actions in Me, regarding Me supreme, meditating on Me with exclusive devotion," (XII. 6), etc., which show that *Karma* is not inconsistent with the *Yogas* of *Jnâna*, *Dhyâna* or *Bhakti*.

Why does then Samkara categorically deny the co-existence of *Jnâna* and *Karma*? It has been repeatedly asserted by him that the two cannot be practised simultaneously. At the outset of his commentary on the *Geetâ* (II. 11) he states: "It is not, therefore, possible for anybody to show that the *Geetâ-shâstra* teaches a conjunction of knowledge with any work whatever enjoined in the *Shruti* or in the *Smriti*." There is no gainsaying the fact that *Kâmya Karma* (work done with motive) is incompatible with *Jnâna* and that no work whatsoever is possible in the state of *Brahmajnâna* when all distinctions of instrument, object and agent, the threefold basis of action, melt away. But that is not Samkara's only point of contention. According to him, the very *Yogas* of *Jnâna* and *Karma* are mutually exclusive. It is stated by him in his commentary on the third verse of the third chapter of the *Geetâ* that "the two paths of knowledge and action were

respectively intended for two distinct classes of aspirants."

The thing is that Samkara uses the term *Karma* in a very restricted sense. What is done with the idea of actorship is, according to him, *Karma*. All work done after *Sattva-shuddhi* (purity of mind) he includes in *Jnâna*, as the doer has then no idea of actorship in him. That a person, steadfast in the path of *Jnâna* can continue the performance of work, Samkara does not deny. Only he calls him a *Jnâna Yogi* or *Jnânâ-nistha* instead of *Karma Yogi* or *Karmâ-nistha*. So in his sense no conjunction of *Jnâna* and *Karma* is possible. In his introductory remarks on the very first *Sloka* (II. 11) with which he begins his commentary on the *Geetâ*, he states: "Now a person who having been first engaged in works owing to ignorance and worldly attachment and other evil tendencies, and having since attained purity of mind by sacrificial rites, gifts, austerity, etc., arrives at the knowledge of the grand truth that 'all is one, the *Brahman*, the Absolute, the non-agent,' may continue performing works in the same manner as before with a view to set an example to the masses, though neither works nor their results attract him any longer. This semblance of active life on his part cannot constitute that course of action with which knowledge is sought to be conjoined as a means of attaining *Moksha*." Again in his commentary on *Sloka* 20, Chapter IV, he observes: "Finding that for some reason he cannot abandon action, a wise man may continue doing action as before, with a view to set an example to the world at large, devoid of attachment to action and its result, and therefore having no selfish end in view, such a man really does nothing."

Thus, according to Samkara, *Karma Yoga* is simply conducive to *Jnâna Yoga*. It is a remote aid to the attainment of *Moksha*, with which it has no direct connection. It leads to perfection, as he says: '*Sattva-shuddhi-Yoga-Jnâna-prâpti-dvârena*) "through purity of mind, *Yoga* and attainment



of knowledge." (*Vide Com. on XII. 10*). By "attainment of knowledge" he means the realisation of oneness with *Brahman*. This he holds to be the proximate cause of Liberation, as bondage is due to the ignorance of identity with *Brahman*. Says he in his *Viveka-chuddāmani* (Sl. 58): "Neither by *Yoga*, nor by *Sāmkhya*, nor by *Karma*, nor by *Vidyā*, but by the realisation of one's identity with *Brahman* is Liberation possible, and by no other means." The same view is expressed in his commentary on the *Geetā* (II. 11): "Therefore, the conclusion of the *Geetā* is that *Moksha* is attained by *Tattva-jñāna* (consciousness of identity with *Brahman*) alone and not by that conjoined with works." By '*Yoga*,' used in the expression, '*Sattva-shuddhi-Yoga-Jñāna-prāpti-dvārena*,' he implies *Jñāna Yoga*. The threefold path of *Shravana*, *Manana* and *Nididhyāsana* is regarded as *Jñāna Yoga* proper. The *Yoga* of *Sāmkhya*, characterised by the discrimination of *Atman* from the *Ġunas* as their witness and the *Yoga* of devotion, consisting in the meditation on the Supreme Lord (*Paramesvara*), are considered by him only as based on *Advaita* conception, and are included in *Jñāna Yoga*, as leading to *Jñāna*, the consciousness of identity with *Brahman*. Hence, in his view, *Jñāna Yoga* is the sole means of the attainment of *Moksha*. There is no alternative course. Thus, he refutes *Samuchchaya* (conjunction) of *Jñāna* and *Karma* as well as their *Vikalpa* (alternation).

But Swami, Vivekananda, the greatest advocate of the *Vedānta* in the modern age, holds a view of *Karma Yoga*, which is, in certain respects, different from that of *Samkara*. In one of his lectures on *Karma Yoga*, *Non-attachment is Complete Self-abnegation*, he says: "Each one of our *Yogas* is fitted to make man perfect even without the help of others, because they have all the same goal in view. The *Yogas* of work, of wisdom and of devotion are all capable of serving as direct and independent means for

the attainment of *Moksha*." But the contradiction, though so marked, is really only apparent in so far as the philosophical basis is concerned. Swami Vivekananda uses the term *Karma* not in the same restricted sense as *Samkara*. He makes quite a free and wide application of it. By *Karma* he means not only the disinterested work done before *Chitta-shuddhi*, but also that performed after the attainment of *Jñāna-nisthā*. If an aspirant has such a prevailing tendency to work as to continue it even in the stage of *Jñāna-nisthā*, Swamiji chooses to call him a *Karma Yogi* instead of *Jñāna Yogi*. So his *Karma Yoga* reaches as near the goal as *Jñāna Yoga*. The one leads to *Moksha* in the same way as the other through 'the knowledge of the identity of the self with *Brahman*.' That the knowledge of one's identity with *Brahman* is the immediate cause of *Moksha* by the destruction of primal ignorance, has also been maintained by Swami Vivekananda. In his *Conversations and Dialogues* recorded from the Diary of a Disciple, we find the following remark: "The various methods of spiritual practice that have been laid down in the scriptures are all for the attainment of the knowledge of *Atman*. Of course, these practices vary according to the qualifications of different aspirants. But they also are a kind of work, and so long as there is work, the *Atman* is not discovered. The obstacles to the manifestation of the *Atman* are overcome by practices as laid down in the scriptures, but work has no power of directly manifesting the *Atman*; it is only effective in removing some veils that cover knowledge. Then the *Atman* manifests by its own effulgence." That *Bhakti Yoga*, attended even with *Karma*, is effective of Freedom, through right knowledge (*Samyak-darsana*) has also been acknowledged by *Samkara*. He explains *Sloka 26*, Chap. XIV of the *Geetā* as follows: "A *Sannyāsin* or even a man of works (*Karmīn*) who serves Me—the *Isvara*, *Nārāyana*,—dwelling in the heart of all beings, with

a never-failing *Bhakti Yoga*, crosses beyond the three *Gunas* mentioned above and is fit to become *Brahman*, i.e., for *Moksha*." Annotating on this passage, Anandagiri remarks : "*Bhakti Yoga* is that Supreme Love (*Parama-prema*) which leads to communion with the Supreme. To serve God in *Bhakti Yoga* means to constantly contemplate Him by completely withdrawing the mind from all external objects, from the non-self. By virtue of the Divine grace he is endowed with right knowledge. Thus enlightened, he becomes *Brahman* while still alive."

Thus the contradiction between Samkara and Swami Vivekananda can be said to be mostly verbal. There is no real disagreement as regards the philosophy of *Karma Yoga* in the basic conceptions, though different results follow as regards practice from their different view-points. And from the Swami's view-point of *Karma Yoga*, certain *Slokas* of the *Geetâ*, as the following, admit of more natural interpretation than given by some classical commentators : "Children, not the wise, speak of knowledge and performance of action as distinct. He who is rightly devoted to even one obtains the fruits of both." (V. 4). "By meditation some behold the Self in the Self by the Self, others by *Sâmkhyâ Yoga*, and others by *Karma Yoga*." (XIII. 24).

Hence, *Karma*, in the sense of Swami Vivekananda, is not only a direct means of Liberation, but is also capable of being performed in conjunction with *Jnâna*. As a matter of fact, the definition of the *Yogas* is more or less conventional. Their distinction is more formal than essential. In substance, they are not quite exclusive of one another. So the following assertion of Swami Vivekananda as to the mixed character of the *Yogas*, though a statement of fact, does not any way refute Samkara's doctrine that *Karma* can never be reconciled with *Jnâna*. In his lecture on the *Ideal of Karma Yoga* he says : "But you must at the same

time remember that these divisions are not very marked and quite exclusive of each other. Each blends into the other. But according to the type which prevails, we name the divisions. It is not that you cannot find a man who has no other faculty than that of work, nor that you cannot find a man who are more than devoted worshippers only, nor that there are not men who have more than mere knowledge." The difference of view-points with regard to *Jnâna* and *Karma* naturally find different expressions in Samkara and Swami Vivekananda.

#### IV

Their different interpretations of *Karma Yoga* are perhaps due to the difference of environments in which they lived and worked. Samkara had to fight against the *Mimânsakas*, whose vindication of *Karma* as a means of *Moksha* was not in keeping with the highest *Vedic* truth. So he makes *Jnâna* more prominent than *Karma*. He directs the whole attention to the inner spirit of renunciation rather than the actual performance of work. To him work counts little. But Swami Vivekananda had to face a different situation. He had to deal with the present active, busy, complex life of intellectual triumph and material achievements—a life which cannot be readily turned into primitive simplicity or *Sâttvica* inaction. The age, therefore, demanded of him some spiritualising principle of *Karma*, which would serve as a pivot for its maddening course of activity. Then, there were others who were immersed in *Tâmasica* passivity under the pretence of *Sâttvica* quiescence. They had to be roused to action with a fresh and sublime vision of the life of *Karma*. Consequently Swami Vivekananda had to present *Karma Yoga* with a broad elevated outlook. In fact, he laid greater stress on renunciation in work than renunciation of work. With '*Âtmano Mokshârtham*' ('for the emancipation of self') he added '*Jagaddhitâya*' ('for the

the world"). "For the good of the many and for the happiness of the many is your life," he was never tired of reminding us. It should not, however, be supposed that the Swami did not find any necessity of *Karma-sannyāsa* for this age. The bliss and glory of the reposeful life of a recluse had a peculiar charm for him. It had to him a value all its own. Even in his *Karma Yoga*, he states : "The highest kind of men silently collect true and noble ideas, and others, the Buddhas and Christs, go from place to place preaching them and working for them." (Lecture on *Freedom*).

Swami Vivekananda has further widened the scope of *Karma Yoga* by allowing it a position independent of theistic faith and metaphysical doctrines. In his lecture on the *Ideal of Karma Yoga*, he says : "The *Karma Yogi* need not believe in any doctrine whatever. He may not believe even in God, may not ask what his soul is, nor think of any metaphysical speculation. He has got his own special aim of realising selflessness, and he has to work it out himself. Every moment of his life must be realisation, because he has to solve by work, without the help of doctrine or theory, the very same problem to which the *Jnāni* applies his reason and inspiration and the *Bhakta* his love." Here the Swami has perhaps in his view the Buddhist conception of *Karma* as a means of *Nirvāna*. Buddha was actuated by practical consideration rather than by speculative spirit. He viewed life as it is and took his start from where we are. The primary object of all human efforts is to overcome misery. The root of all sufferings is evidently desire. This, he points out, originates with the egoistic self. So in order to go beyond all sufferings, one has to abnegate the self completely. This can be well done through *Karma*. By *Nirvāna* Buddha means the extinction of the psychological self. He did not actually deny the metaphysical self. Let the personal existence, the embodiment of all evils, be destroyed and what

remains, if any, will assert itself;—this perhaps was the implication of his silence regarding the ultimate truth, which is beyond mind and speech, as declared by the *Vedānta*. *Vedāntic Karma Yoga* has also adopted the same negative method of self-denial. It also aims at Liberation by eradicating personality, the offspring of ignorance. Perfect non-attachment is but the culmination of self-abnegation. This point of contact between Buddhism and *Vedāntism* has provided the Swami with sufficient ground for holding the above view of *Karma Yoga*. Unlike Buddhism, *Vedāntism* has added to this negative process a positive conception of *Atman* or the inmost being as the ultimate ground of all knowledge and experience.)

In one respect Swami Vivekananda has made a distinct contribution to the conception of *Karma Yoga*. We have seen that work done as an offering to God results in the highest good. It is said in the *Geetā* : "From whom is the evolution of all beings, by whom all this is pervaded, worshipping Him with his own duty, a man attains perfection." (XVIII. 46). The Swamiji brings out the full significance of this teaching of the *Geetā* and presents it in a new light. To do one's duty with the consciousness that it gives God satisfaction is, no doubt, an indirect form of worship. The Swami turns this into a direct method of service. He shows that we can worship God face to face through our dealings with others. He calls upon us to look on all beings as veritable manifestations of God and serve and worship Him in them.

"From the highest *Brahman* to the  
yonder worm,

And to the very minutest atom,  
Everywhere the same God the All-Love;  
Friend, offer mind, soul, body at  
their feet.

These are His manifold forms before  
thee,

Rejecting them, where seekest thou  
for God?

Who loves all beings, without  
distinction,  
He indeed is worshipping best his  
God."

This is his clarion call to the modern age. The fact that the sages find God in all beings and love them as such, has been again and again declared by the *Shâstras*. This supreme vision of spiritual life the Swamiji exhorts us to embody in our daily practices. The very end is recommended to the aspirant as the means. The Swami's genius lies in the widest possible application he makes of the sublime truth in the common life of man.

One may doubt the Swami's originality in this, in view of the fact that similar principles of conduct have been previously inculcated in the *Shâstras*. In the *Taittiriya Upanishad* (I. 11. 2) we find the following instructions: "Let thy mother be to thee a god; let thy father be a god to thee; a god let thy teacher be unto thee, and (so also) let thy guest be unto thee a god." But a little attention to the trend of the lessons will bring home to one that these have the nature of moral precepts rather than spiritual discipline. These advices are given by the preceptor to the pupil on the threshold of household life at the close of his educational career. They require us to serve our parents and other persons deserving respect with as much veneration as is due to a god. But the Swami asks us to serve the Supreme God through one

and all. In one case the idea of father, mother, etc., is predominant; in the other, the consciousness of God reigns supreme. The two attitudes are, however, so related that one may ultimately lead to the other.) Swamiji's message is the logical conclusion of the teachings of the *Upanishads* and the *Geetâ*.)

With the progress of thought and the triumph of science a new consciousness of man's inherent greatness has dawned upon humanity. The Divinity of man has been a fact of more general recognition than ever. Mankind has been drawn close together in inseparable ties of fellow-feeling and co-operation. None can live isolated or grow at the expense of others. A synthetic vision of the widest expanse has opened before man in all directions. World-culture, world-religion and world-peace have become the crying needs of the day. The disastrous effects that are produced by the perversion of the outgoing forces of men, have also been sadly watched. The necessity of a spiritual outlook of life has been keenly felt in all quarters as the panacea for all evils. The time-spirit has consequently given birth to a universal regulative principle which can be adopted by the majority of mankind, irrespective of colour, creed, caste or position, which is calculated to foster utmost love, good-will and respect between man and man and which harmonises tremendous practicality with profundity of feeling and sublimity of vision.

## THE EDUCATIONAL METHOD

BY SISTER NIVEDITA

We all talk glibly about education, but how many of us have asked ourselves the question, what is education? What are its ideals? Where are the truest educators to be found? And yet in these directions, certain clear and more or less incontestable opinions have been arrived at by thinkers and workers which might be made material of common knowledge.

We do not apply the word education to what we learn, for instance, from the tailor or the cook, when we desire for one reason or another to acquire their professional knowledge. To learn to practise some special art is not to be 'educated', yet the learning of these very arts may be essential to a real education. What, then, do we mean by this word? Evidently we use it to denote a

training of the mind as such, in which, if we will examine our conception, we shall find that we look to produce, not so much a familiarity with certain definite facts, as a trained power of attention and concentration, an ability to think connectedly and inquire persistently about a given subject, and a capacity for willing rightly and efficiently.

It is clear that if we would will efficiently, a certain physical training may be necessary. It is clear that if we desire the power of sustained thought, there may be certain branches of knowledge with which we are obliged to become familiar, but these are questions of *method* merely: the educational *purpose* is directed towards the training of the mind as such, alone. If this be so, the nature of the mind becomes more important to us than any special subject that has to be taught. The task undertaken being in effect a species of mental gymnastics, the question of the muscle to be developed is prior to that of the particular movements by which the development is to be achieved. It is along psychological lines, then, that a science of education is a possibility, and it is here that the comparison of methods becomes valuable. A special mode of teaching French or German, so that the learner may make the greatest possible progress in the shortest possible time, may or may not be final. About the principles of educational psychology, once they are ascertained, there can be no doubt. They are as fixed as those of any other science.

When we begin to seek out educational models, we are startled to discover them of truest outside the school-room. It is rarely that we meet a teacher who does his work with the same thoroughness as a mother. The ideal method is often enough the inborn gift of an ignorant woman. And this, if we will think about it, is not nearly so paradoxical as it may seem, for surely the need is not so much to teach the child as to stimulate the child to teach himself, and throughout babyhood there

is a growing effort to render the taught independent of the teacher. This was the truth that was so deeply understood by Froebel, when he went up and down the German valleys, observing and analysing the children's play, that he might make of the school-room a "child-garden" or *Kindergarten*. It is not of course true that every mother is a born teacher, but it might possibly be hazarded on the other hand, that every good teacher, whether a man or a woman, is something of a mother.

And first if we compare the modern school-room in India with the Indian nursery, we shall be struck by at least one great difference. The nursery knows nothing, either of lecture or text-books. Few men ever acquire the same ease and precision in mathematics as they do in walking, yet walking is taught almost without any word at all.

Is there a specific difference in this respect between the two activities, or do they both depend at bottom on development of *Faculty*? Undoubtedly there is specific difference, mathematics being a function of language itself, but at the same time the human intellect would acquire a deepened mastery of the subject, if it could only be dominated in its pursuit by kindred concepts to those which guide us in acquiring the art of walking. The nurse sets the child to walk. She watches and guides his efforts. She protects from irretrievable injury. And all this she does by raising the spontaneous desire of the child himself for activity. Such is the true teaching.

For it cannot be said too often that *telling is not teaching*. Words do not convey knowledge. Education and information are not the same thing. True knowledge is the result of experience. And he who would impart it must provide for this. Or again, right training is the result of right will, and this cannot be evoked by mere words of command.

The true teacher, then, is only following the lead given him by the mind and nature of the child. But he is fol-

lowing that lead, while himself conscious of a great intention. Intellectual power is not so much a special ability for this or that, as an irresistible pushing onwards, of the mind towards the co-ordination of larger areas of expe-

rience in continually depending sequences. It is, in other words, energy, rather than a habit or trick, of thought. But this energy will only be awakened successfully by one who is conscious of striving to evoke it.

## ASHTAVAKRA SAMHITA

By SWAMI NITYASWARUPANANDA

### CHAPTER XV

KNOWLEDGE OF THE SELF

अष्टावक्र उवाच ।

यथातथोपदेशेन कृतार्थः सत्तुबुद्धिमान् ।

आजीवमपि जिज्ञासुः परस्तत्र विमुह्यति ॥१॥

अष्टावक्रः Ashtavakra उवाच said :

सत्तुबुद्धिमान् A man of pure intellect यथातथा in whatever manner उपदेशेन by instruction कृतार्थः fulfilled (स्वात् becomes. परः the other आजीवम् through whole life जिज्ञासुः desirous to know अपि even तत्र there विमुह्यति is bewildered.

1. A man of pure<sup>1</sup> intellect is fulfilled<sup>2</sup> even by instruction casually<sup>3</sup> imparted. The other<sup>4</sup> is bewildered<sup>5</sup> there<sup>6</sup> even after enquiring<sup>7</sup> through whole life.

[<sup>1</sup> Pure etc.—Self-knowledge instantaneously dawns upon one who has his intellect completely purified by undergoing the necessary disciplines and endowing himself with the four qualifications required of him (see note 3, verse 1, chap. I). 'Pure' indicates that the intellect has been freed from the elements of *rajas* and *tamas*, and is full of *sattva*.

<sup>2</sup> Fulfilled—by the realisation of the Self.

<sup>3</sup> Casually etc.—whenever and in whatever manner instructions on the Self are imparted to him by the *Guru*. A little instruction is enough for a qualified disciple.

<sup>4</sup> Other—who is not qualified and has not got rid of *rajas* and *tamas*.

<sup>5</sup> Bewildered—because an unqualified aspirant misconceives the nature of the *Atman*. Only a purified intellect can conceive it.

<sup>6</sup> There—in the realisation of the Self.

<sup>7</sup> Enquiring—seeking to know *Brahman*.]

मोक्षो विषयवैरस्यं बन्धो वैषयिको रसः ।

एतावदेव विज्ञानं यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु ॥२॥

विषयवैरस्यं Distaste for the sense-objects मोक्षः liberation (भवति is) वैषयिकः relating to sense-objects रसः pleasurable attachment बन्धः bondage (भवति is) एतावत् of such kind एव verily विज्ञानं knowledge (भवति is) यथा as ( ते you ) इच्छसि wish तथा so कुरु do.

2. Distaste for sense-objects is liberation ; love for sense-objects is bondage. Such verily is Knowledge. Now do as you please.

[Ashtavakra tersely describes the essential nature of liberation and bondage, and points out the sole duty of the aspirant.]

वाग्मिप्राज्ञमहोद्योगं जनं मूकजडालसम् ।

करोति तत्तद्बोधोऽयमतस्त्यक्तो बुभुक्षुमिः ॥३॥

अयं 'This तत्त्वबोधः knowledge of the truth वाग्मिप्राज्ञमहोद्योगं' eloquent, wise and active जनं man मूकजडालसं mute, inert and inactive करोति makes अतः so बुभुक्षुमिः by those who want to enjoy त्यक्तः is shunned.

3. This knowledge of the Truth makes<sup>1</sup> an eloquent, wise and active person mute, inert and inactive. Hence it is that it is shunned<sup>2</sup> by those who want to enjoy the world.

[<sup>1</sup> Makes etc.—The passage should not be understood literally. All our talks, knowledge and activities have some attainable objects in view. When one realises the Self who is the All and the Whole, nothing remains to be attained, and hence all talking, knowing and doing cease. One then appears as silent, inert and inactive. This is a sign of the highest realisation. Mere outward silence and inactivity are nothing. These must be the outcome of deep realisation.

<sup>2</sup> Shunned—because worldly or heavenly enjoyment is impossible in that high spiritual state. The mentality of a worldly person is diametrically opposed to that of a Knower of Self.]

न त्वं देहो न ते देहो भोक्ता कर्त्ता न वा भवान् ।

चिद्रूपोऽसि सदा साक्षी निरपेक्षः सुखं चर ॥४॥

त्वं You देहः body न not ते your देहः body न not भवान् you कर्त्ता doer भोक्ता enjoyer वा or न not (त्वं you) चिद्रूपः Intelligence itself सदा ever साक्षी witness निरपेक्षः free अस्मि are सुखं' happily चर roam.

4. You are not the body, nor is the body yours, nor are you the doer or the enjoyer. You are Intelligence itself, the eternal witness and free.<sup>1</sup> Wander happily.

[<sup>1</sup> Free—does not depend on or is conditioned by anything.]

रागद्वेषौ मनोधर्मौ न मनस्ते कदाचन ।

निर्विकल्पोऽसि बोधात्मा निर्विकारः सुखं चर ॥५॥

रागद्वेषौ Attachment and abhorrence मनोधर्मौ' attributes of mind ( भवतः are ) मनः mind कदाचन ever ते your न not ( भवति is त्वं you ) निर्विकल्पः free from conflict बोधात्मा Intelligence itself निर्विकारः changeless अस्मि are सुखं' happily चर move.

5. Attachment and abhorrence are attributes of mind. The mind is never yours. You are free from conflict, Intelligence itself and changeless. Move happily.

[The aspirant should not either love or hate. To do so is to identify one's self with the mind and thus lose the awareness of one's true self. Here by love only narrow, selfish love is meant and not universal love which grows only out of a true knowledge of the Eternal Self.]

सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।

विज्ञाय निरहंकारो निर्ममस्तु सुखी भव ॥६॥

सर्वभूतेषु In all beings चात्मानं Self सर्वभूतानि all beings च also चात्मनि in Self विज्ञाय knowing निरहंकारः free from egoism निर्ममः free from the sense of 'mine' त्वं you सुखी happy भव be.

6. Realising' the Self in all and all in the Self, free from egoism and free from the sense of 'mine', be you happy.

[ 'Realising etc.—When one realises the Self, one actually feels that he is the essence and reality of all things and that all things exist in him. Our present consciousness of the limitation of our own self and of our separateness from all other beings and things, is due to our identification with the mind which with its categories of time, space and causation has created the variegated forms. Disidentify yourself with the mind, and these forms will vanish and only the One will remain, which is both yourself and the whole universe.]

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### In This Number

In the present issue we are able to include as many as three pieces of the unpublished writings and utterances of SWAMI VIVEKANANDA : The first item is *Discourses on Jnana Yoga*, which we hope to continue for several months more. The second, *The Sangha*, is translated from an unpublished Bengali writing, which we request our readers to peruse along with our Note on "Organisation" in *Notes and Comments*. The third item, *Child-Marriage : An Unpublished Letter*, is, as the title itself signifies, an original unpublished letter of the Swami, written from New York on the 28rd December, 1895. In it the readers will find the attitude of Swami Vivekananda towards early marriage in India. His allusion to his own suffering due to early marriage, in course of the letter, is probably a reference to the death of one of his sisters under painful circumstances. By the way, we may remember that the Sarda Marriage Act comes into force on the 1st April. . . . We introduce to our readers a new writer, SHIV CHANDRA DATTA, M.A., B.L., who contributes *Mahatma Gandhi's Economic Ideas* to the present number. Mr.

Datta is a serious student of Economics, especially Indian Economics, is a research fellow of an Economic Institute at Calcutta, and has been a professor of Economics in a Calcutta College. Our readers know that *Prabuddha Bharata* has not found it possible to support the economic policy of Mahatma Gandhi in toto. But it is due to that great soul that we give our readers an idea of what that economic policy is. Mr. Datta's article is a conscientious presentation of Mahatmaji's economic views. The writer will continue the subject in another article next month. . . . We publish this month an article, *The Pilgrim of India*, by ROMAIN ROLLAND on Swami Vivekananda. We hope to be able to publish further articles by this great savant on the life and teachings of the Swami in the next issues of *Prabuddha Bharata*. . . . SWAMI SATPRAKASHANANDA who contributes *Karma Yoga : Its Significance and Present Application*, is a monk of the Ramakrishna Order. We have no doubt that our readers will appreciate the writer's learned delineation of the subject and especially his comparison of the views of Shankara and Swami Vivekananda on *Karma Yoga*. The Swami has



sought to be thorough in his treatment of his subject in its various aspects. . . *The Educational Method* by SISTER NIVEDITA is taken from the Ms. of an unpublished book on Education by her. This may be considered as an introduction to a series of three articles on the practice of education, which we hope to publish by and by.

### Swami Vivekananda on Ahimsa, Etc.

The following is the fourth and last instalment of quotations from the speeches and writings of Swami Vivekananda stating his views of the correct Indian outlook on life :

“With us, the prominent idea is *Mukti*; with the Westerners, it is *Dharma*. What we desire is—*Mukti*; what they want is—*Dharma*. Here the word *Dharma* is used in the sense of the *Mimāṃsakas*. What is *Dharma*? *Dharma* is that which makes man seek for happiness in this world or the next. *Dharma* is established on work; *Dharma* is impelling man day and night to run after, and work for, happiness.

“What is *Mukti*? That which teaches that even the happiness of this life is slavery, and the same is the happiness of the life to come, because neither this world nor the next is beyond the laws of nature; only, the slavery of this world is to that of the next, as an iron chain is to a golden one. Again, happiness, wherever it may be, being within the laws of nature, is subject to death and will not last *ad infinitum*. Therefore, man must aspire to become *Mukta*, he must go beyond the bondage of the body; slavery will not do. This *Moksha*-path is only in India and nowhere else. Hence is true the oft-repeated saying that *Mukta* souls are only in India and in no other country. But it is equally true that in future they will be in other countries as well;—that is well and good, and a thing of great pleasure to us. There was a time in India, when *Dharma* was compatible with *Mukti*. There were worshippers of

*Dharma*, such as Yudhisthira, Arjuna, Duryodhana, Bhishma and Karna, side by side with the aspirants of *Mukti*, such as Vyasa, Suka and Janaka. On the advent of Buddhism, *Dharma* was entirely neglected, and the path of *Moksha* alone became predominant. Hence, we read in the *Agni Purāṇa*, in the language of similes, that the demon Gayasura—that is, Buddha, tried to destroy the world, by showing the path of *Moksha* to all; and therefore, the *Devas* held a council, and by stratagem set him at rest for ever.\* However, the central fact is that the fall of our country, of which we hear so much spoken, is due to the utter want of this *Dharma*. If the whole nation practises and follows the path of *Moksha*, that is well and good; but is that possible? Without enjoyment, renunciation can never come; first enjoy and then you can renounce. Otherwise, if the whole nation, all of a sudden, takes up *Sannyāsa*, it does not gain what it desires, but it loses what it had into the bargain,—the bird in the hand is fled, nor is that in the bush caught. When, in the heyday of Buddhistic supremacy, thousands of *Sannyāsin*s lived in every monastery, then it was that the country was just on the verge of its ruin! The Bauddhas, the Christians, the Mussalmans and the Jains prescribe, in their folly, the same law and the same rule for all. That is a great mistake; education, habits, customs, laws and rules should be different for different men and nations, in conformity with their differences of temperament. What will it avail, if it is tried to make them all uniform by compulsion? The Bauddhas declared, ‘Nothing is more desirable in life than *Moksha*; whoever you are, come one and all to take it.’ I ask, ‘Is that ever possible?’ You are a householder, you must not concern yourself much with

\* Swamiji afterwards changed this view with reference to Buddha—see the complete works of Swami Vivekananda, Vol. V, P. 113.

things of that sort, you do your *Sva-dharma*—thus say the Hindu scriptures. Exactly so. He who cannot leap over one foot, is going to jump across the ocean to Lanka in one bound! Is it reason? You cannot feed your own family, or dole out food to two of your fellowmen, you cannot do even an ordinary piece of work for the common good, in harmony with others, and you are running after *Mukti*!! The Hindu scriptures say, ‘No doubt, *Moksha* is far superior to *Dharma*; but *Dharma* should be finished first of all.’ The Bauddhas were confounded just there and brought about all sorts of mischief. Non-injury is right. ‘Resist not evil’ is a great thing,—these are indeed grand principles; but the *Shâstras* say, Thou art a householder, if anyone smite thee on thy cheek, and thou dost not return him an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, thou wilt verily be a sinner. Manu says, ‘When one has come to kill you, there is no sin in killing him, even though he is a *Brâhmana*.’ (*Manu*, VIII. 350). This is very true and this is a thing which should not be forgotten. Heroes only enjoy the world. Show your heroism, apply, according to circumstances, the fourfold political maxims of conciliation, bribery, sowing dissensions and open war, to win over your adversary, and enjoy the world,—then you will be *Dhârmika*. Otherwise, you live a disgraceful life if you pocket your insults, when you are kicked and trodden down by anyone who takes it into his head to do so; your life is a veritable hell here, and so is the life hereafter. This is what the *Shâstras* say. Do your *Svadharma*—this is the truth, the truth of truths. This is my advice to you, my beloved co-religionists. Of course, do not do any wrong, do not injure or tyrannise over anyone, but try to do good to others as much as you can. But to passively submit to wrong done by others is a sin,—with the householder; he must try to pay them back in their own coin then and there. The householder must earn money with great effort and enthusiasm,

and by that must support and bring comforts to his own family and to others, and perform good works as far as possible. If you cannot do that, how do you profess to be a man? You are not a householder even,—what to talk of *Moksha* for you!! . . . .

“The good for him who desires *Moksha* is one, and the good for him who wants *Dharma* is another. This is the great truth which the Lord Sri Krishna, the revealer of the *Gîtâ*, has tried therein so much to explain, and upon this great truth is established the *Varnâshrama* system and the doctrine of *Svadharma* etc., of the Hindu religion. ‘He who has no enemy, and is friendly and compassionate towards all, who is free from the feelings of “me and mine,” even-minded in pain and pleasure, and forbearing,’ and other words of like nature, are for him whose one goal in life is *Moksha*. And,—‘Yield not to unmanliness, O son of Pritha! Ill doth it befit thee. Cast off this mean faint-heartedness and arise, O scorcher of thine enemies,’ as also,—‘Therefore do thou arise and acquire fame. After conquering thy enemies, enjoy unrivalled dominion; verily, by Myself have they been already slain; be thou merely the instrument, O *Savyasâchin* (Arjuna),’ and other similar words in the *Gîtâ* are those by which the Lord is showing the way to *Dharma*. Of course, work is always mixed with good and evil, and to work one has to incur sin, more or less. But what of that? Let it be so. Is not something better than nothing? . . . Man steals and man tells lies, and again it is man that becomes a god. . . .

“Coming under the influence of the Jains, Bauddhas and others, we have joined the lines of those *Tâmasika* people;—during these last thousand years, the whole country is filling the air with the name of the Lord, and is sending its prayers to Him; and the Lord is never lending His ears to them. And why should He? When even man never hears the cries of the fool, do you think God will? Now the only

way out is to listen to the words of the Lord in the *Gītā*,—‘Yield not to unmanliness, O Pârtha.’—‘Therefore do thou arise and acquire fame.’ . . .

“It is only the Vedic religion which considers ways and means and lays down rules for the fourfold attainment of man, comprising *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kâma* and *Moksha*. Buddha ruined us, and so did Christ ruin Greece and Rome! Then, in due course of time, fortunately, the Europeans became Protestants, shook off the teachings of Christ as represented by Papal authority, and heaved a sigh of relief. In India, Kumarilla again brought into currency the *Karma-Mârga*, the way of *Karma* only, and Sankara and Ramanuja firmly re-established the Eternal Vedic religion, harmonising and balancing in due proportions *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kâma* and *Moksha*. Thus the nation was brought to the way of regaining its lost life; but India has three hundred million souls to awake, and hence the delay. To revive three hundred millions, can it be done in a day?” (*The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. V., pp. 349-357).

### Anti-Religious Propaganda

Reports from Moscow say that under the Soviet Government, marked by the anti-religious spirit, many churches are being abolished. Apart from the question as to what has led to such a terrible reaction against religion in Russia, the more serious problem is that everywhere in the world there is a growing tendency to decry and belittle religion. True, in the history of the world many irreligious acts have been perpetrated in the name of religion. People professing religion have not always lived up to their faith. But then the remedy does not lie in destroying religion, but in making a vigorous effort to translate the principles of religion into actual life. For to deny religion is to deny the experiences of those who have been the salt of the earth,—of men who have showered blessings upon humanity.

What is most striking is that persons who talk against religion are not always those who have thought deeply over its problems or made serious attempts to live a better life. Religion is the subject of attack more often than not from dilettantes who select it as the region of their casual holiday; and what is stranger still is that they should find a rapt audience to encourage them. Dr. W. L. Sullivan of America in a recent issue of *The Atlantic Monthly* gives a “vigorous application of logic-poultice to some of the inflammations which the critics of religion have offered as healthy and sincere arguments.”

Referring to the critics of religion he says: “A good many of them deal with religion as though any kind of thought would suffice for it, however loose; any kind of culture, however provincial, any kind of dismissal, however summary and crude. In fact, some of them employ in the treatment of it methods so leaky, that if they studied any other subject in like manner they would lose their intellectual reputation. And this is too bad, . . . because an ill-educated nation is being led to believe such nonsense as that a trained modern intelligence cannot accept God any longer, and so pitches forward into the spiritual anarchy which the men who are creating it are utterly powerless to cure.” Yet “Religion is the first beautiful companion that man encountered in his wilderness. . . It is never far away when man knows exaltation and rapture. It is always present when he transcends himself in unearthly consecrations. It opens the door of vision when his genius hungers and thirsts for the substance behind all symbols, and other hand that can open it there is none. In life it is with him, illuminating him in his noblest, scourging him at his basest—the latter presence even more wistfully loved than the former. Neither in death does it leave him; but when all other voices moan of irreparable defeat, it alone lifts the cry of defiance and stands on the ruins of mortality announcing

mysterious and splendid victory of the fallen."

The learned Doctor thinks it futile to go into the causes which have given rise to the anti-religious tendencies, what he deplores is the frivolous way in which the fight against religion is pursued. "Whatever the cause is—whether it is due to spiritual exhaustion which has brought over famine in philosophical minds, whether it is the disparagement of intellect and the exalting of the infantile which are the current fashion in psychology; whether it is the lurch to immoralism which now is receiving a benediction from erudition; or whether it is the disposition to go where bedlam is loudest which is observable in obsequious academies and pulpits alike—we cannot but notice the incoherence and even the intolerance of the great warfare against the divine."

It is a sign of the bankruptcy of intelligence or atavistic emotionalism to believe in the words of a Jesus or a Buddha, but we are asked to take as gospel truth what a Darwin or a Huxley or a Freud says—howsoever quixotic their theories might be. God and religion are to be ousted from the society. What is the substitute? "We are now having morality defined as conduct that best serves the human physiological organism. We hear from an eminent philosopher in England that infidelity in marriage is not a thing to take offense at, but to expect and condone. Another scholar tells us that libidinousness, whoever commits it, need give us no concern if only it is attended with 'artistry.' Still others admit frankly that in sex habits we are reverting to the level of savages and that it is right, we should." Thus "High lords of thought are saying aloud what twenty years ago the brothel would not have said above a whisper."

The fact is, one may be a grown-up man, and yet an infant in knowledge and thought. A man may be a great leader of thought; yet he may talk most foolishly about religion and God. Scholarship is no guarantee of a sound

moral life. We require deeper experiences of life before we can hunger and thirst after righteousness. Those who lack them cannot appreciate the wisdom and sincerity of those who are seeking within themselves for the eternal reality. With growing experience there must come a time, when the play-things of the universe will lose interest for us and we shall be eager to find out the Reality behind—we shall yearn to know the First Cause. Such being the case, real religion, we think, is never unsafe, though its forms and ceremonies may and will be modified from time to time. The modern anti-religious spirit, in so far as it is sincere, only indicates that the world is tired of the outward forms of religion and is eager to find its essence.

### Organisation

One of the greatest drawbacks of the modern India is that it lacks organisation. Organisation everywhere is achieving miraculous results. The West is wielding so much power and influence on the world because of its organisational faculties. And Asia is prostrate because of its lack of them. If the East is to rise again, it must organise itself properly. There is no other way.

Why is it that organisation is so much lacking in the East? Why is it that in spite of all earnestness, India cannot combine effectively? One reason is no doubt our long political subjection. Swami Vivekananda often used to say that jealousy is the bane of subject races. Political, or for the matter of that, any kind of subjection narrows down man's activity and mental horizon. Our self contracts. We become self-immured, ultra-subjective. Yet organisation is impossible if there is not a strong tendency of self-effacement. A keen struggle there must be, therefore, for counteracting our present ultra-subjectivity. There are also other reasons. An organisation to be lasting must have a permanent policy. If the policy of an organisation

changes every now and then, the members cannot be expected to hold on to it for long; for no man is a mere machine. The one reason why the Indian National Congress is not as effective as it should be, is that there is a constant change in its policy. Yesterday council-entry was a means of India's salvation. To-day its boycott is the sovereign means and the council-activities were a Himalayan blunder! It is true that the policy of a political organisation has to change along with the change of circumstances. But there must yet be a continuity in the fundamentals. What is wanted is a long vision which will envisage the future and lay down a policy in accordance with it. In every nation there must necessarily be many and various organisations pertaining to the various aspects and activities of the national being. All these organisations should enunciate their policy with a proper sense of the deep truths of the national life and its possible future developments.

It is true that organisation often impedes the free growth of individuals. Perhaps in the life of the world perfection in any thing cannot be expected. If organisation is harmful to individual growth, want of it brings on political and economic slavery and that is equally, if not more, dangerous. A happy mean should be struck between them. Swami Vivekananda urged on his countrymen to develop the powers of organisation; for in that he saw the salvation of his country. Any sort of organisation will not do. All the different forces of the national life must be properly taken into account and co-ordinated. As for example, no organisation in India can last long unless it takes religion into account. This no doubt makes organisation more difficult in India than in other countries. For here the deep spiritual forces can in no way be ignored. The nation's heart-strings are tied to them.

Swami Vivekananda has not merely preached organisation, but has also

carried it out in the Order, the Math and Mission, which he established. It is not merely a religious organisation, as the word religion is commonly understood. For it stands not only for the spiritual regeneration of India and the world, but also for India's all-round growth,—spiritual, intellectual and material. He has co-ordinated all these different aims into a beautiful and natural harmony. And along with that, he has harmonised the urges of individual and collective life: the individual members need not sacrifice their life's quests in the service of the collective being. We have elsewhere\* quoted his views on organisation. The readers will see that in his eyes the organisation which he established was no transient, temporal thing. He believed that great good would be done by and through it to the peoples of the world. He believed, and he had ample reasons for so believing, that Sri Ramakrishna himself was behind it and would be for ever guiding it. It was no merely man-made body in his eyes. And every member has to render his service to it with a worshipful regard and circumspection. The solemn curse that he uttered on those who would injure his Organisation in any way, still sends a shudder through one. *It was no idle utterance.* For the Swami was a man of God, one who was in eternal communion with Him; and the words and activities of such a man partake the nature of Divine actions and utterances. His warning is not that of a mere man of the world, however great.

We believe that whoever would commune with the Lord and work under His inspiration, would be able to invest his activity with this Divine quality and no human power would ever be able to impair it with impunity. It will be endowed with an immortal power and would be as inevitable as the thunder-bolt. Let all workers, in whatever field working, establish relations with the Lord, and derive power and inspiration

\* See p. 59.

from Him. And then their work and their ideas would become permanent and sure, and they will never miss their aim

even as the will of the Lord never misses fulfilment.

## REVIEW

**LECTURES AND ADDRESSES IN INDIA, Part I. Second Edition.** By Swami Abhedananda. *The Ramakrishna Vedanta Society, 40 Beadon Street, Calcutta, X-464 pp. Price not mentioned.*

Swami Abhedananda returned to India in 1906 after ten years of preaching Vedanta in the West. He stayed here for seven months before he left for America again and he was everywhere received with great warmth and enthusiasm as a mark of reverential tribute to what he had done in the cause of Indian religion and civilisation. The book comprises all the lectures and replies to the various addresses of welcome, his discourses and conversations, etc., on that occasion, with a complete account of his memorable tour through India, from Colombo to Bombay by way of Madras, Calcutta and the United Provinces.

The description of the magnificent receptions given to the Swami pointedly shows how the heart of India pines for religion. It is a pity there is at present a section of people in India, who want to ignore or smother this religious feeling.

The learned lectures of the Swami cover a variety of subjects such as religion, philosophy, education, and many phases of Indian problems, and will prove very profitable and interesting reading.

The printing and get-up are fine.

**GREAT SAVIOURS OF THE WORLD, Vol. I.** By Swami Abhedananda. *The Ramakrishna Vedanta Society, 40, Beadon Street, Calcutta. 176 pp. Price Re. 1/8.*

The book contains four of a series of lectures delivered before the "Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences," as also before the Vedanta Society of New York.

It gives the lives and teachings of Krishna, Zoroaster and Lao-Tze and aims to show how the universal religion of Vedanta embraces the teachings of all the faiths of the world.

The book was originally published in America and now an Indian edition has been brought out. The excellence of the book is indicated by the fact that the present is its eighth edition.

The printing and get-up are good.

**THE OPEN PORTAL.** By Sister Devamata. *Ananda-Ashrama, La Crescenta, California, U.S.A. Price Rs. 2/8.*

Sister Devamata has made a new departure in her literary achievement. After publishing a number of exceptionally good prose writings, she offers now to the public a volume of poems entitled "The Open Portal". The poetic grace and charm of her prose style presaged this fresh expression and the new volume possesses the same magnetic quality of her previous books. She gives reason for her title in the Foreword thus: "Love of God and love of Nature are the two open doors to peace and deeper insight;" and she adds that the poems are "the fruits of a modest muse."

The poems are classified into four parts,—"Songs of Devotion and Aspiration," "Songs of Hill and Garden," "Songs of the Desert" and "Songs of Life." The "Songs of Devotion" breathe a deep religious feeling. The closing verse in the opening Song of this section defines aptly the character of all of them:

"My thinking o'erleaps the high barriers  
of thought,

My seeing sweeps beyond the horizon  
line of sight,

The desert's vastness is too narrow for  
the visions wrought

In the still solitudes of my wandering  
thought."

The "Songs of Hill and Garden" show an intimacy with flowers and trees and hillsides that is rarely found; while the "Desert Songs" express a deep love for the vast places of the earth. The author sings:

"The desert calls and calls to me,

I hear the desert call.

Its silence sounds mute melody.

All through the day and all night long

I hear the desert's silent song,

The desert's silent song."

Sister Devamata is also a musician and has set a number of the poems to music. "The Open Portal" is full of inspiration and upliftment and cannot fail to delight all who

read its pages. In binding and printing this new book is a work of art.

GEORGE FOX. *By Rufus M. Jones, D.D., Litt. D., LL.D. With an Introduction by John W. Graham, M.A., Litt. D. The Christian Literature Society for India, Madras. 53 pp. Price As. 8.*

In the Introduction Dr. Graham who spent about five months in India in the cold weather of 1927-28, sets forth his views of Hinduism in comparison with Quakerism and opines that Hinduism can learn from the latter normality in meditation, communal worship, sense of the unity of all mankind, overleaping of the barriers of race, equality of women with men, unbending testimony against all war, etc., etc. No doubt all can learn from all. But such advice as Dr. Graham's would be listened to with respect only after the adviser has given proof of having understood Hinduism. Besides Hindus unfortunately do not yet feel any lack of spiritual wisdom and consolation in their religion. They have enough and to spare.

In the main book Prof. Jones presents a very brief but critical study of George Fox in the several aspects of his life, character, teaching and social work. George Fox's place in the religious history of Europe is among the Spiritual Reformers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. He belongs to the order of the mystical or intuitional prophets of the same general type as St. Francis of Assisi, St. Catherine of Siena and Jacob Boehme of Silesia.

There can be no doubt that the Reformation had made *salvation* the dominant issue

and it still was the fundamental concern of religion with all serious persons. The thing which Fox makes central for his type of Christianity is the continued presence of Christ as a living active Spirit in immediate contact with the inner life of man, producing in the responsive soul a new creation. The salvation which he had preached was forensic, legal—a transaction which took place centuries ago. Fox maintained instead that salvation is a *vital process* wrought out in man's own life by a Divine indwelling presence operating there.

Fox was a valiant exponent in his day of the view that the revelation of God is continuous and unbroken. This was his worst 'heresy' in the eyes of his opponents. For them revelation was a closed and finished affair. It occurred only in a limited 'dispensation' and then came to a sharp and decisive end. It is confined to a Book, and that Book is in every phrase and sentence the word of God, the revealed will of God for all time. It contained, they held, all the spiritual truth that man will ever need to know or ever can know. Fox quietly set that view on one side as hopelessly untenable. In place of this static and finished system Fox believed that the day-dawn is continually coming and the day-star is for ever rising in men's hearts. Truth is always being born, new light breaks forth from age to age, as men become responsive organs of the mind and will of God.

The presentation of the life of George Fox, though brief, is yet illuminating and profitable, especially to the orthodox Christians. The printing and get-up are good.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### An Appeal from the Khasi Hills, Assam

We have received the following appeal for publication from Swami Prabhananda of the Ramakrishna Order, who is working among the Khasis of Assam:

At the instance of a few Khasi friends some monks of the Ramkrishna Mission started educational works in these hills in 1924. The object of this movement has been to present to our Khasi friends the fundamentals of true Indian culture as evinced in the lives and teachings of Sri Ramkrishna and Swami Vivekananda. It is needless to

say that these great men exhorted people to rise superior to narrow sectarianism by drawing their inspiration from the Vedanta Philosophy which has a universal appeal.

The work has expanded steadily and at present there are two Middle English, six Lower Primary and three night schools; nearly 800 boys and girls are reading in those schools; two boarding houses are maintained, one at the Ashram quarters at Shella and the other at Sunamganj (Sylhet) where six boys are reading at the High English school. In the Ashram and other localities weekly classes are held for adults and lantern lectures are occasionally

arranged. The publication of non-sectarian religious literature and school books in the Khasi language has also been taken in hand. The needs of the poor sick of all sects are also being attended to for which a stock of homeopathic and biochemic medicines has been kept. All these works are conducted by three monastic and twelve voluntary workers (Bengali and Khasi).

For the management and expansion of the above-mentioned work a Committee has been formed at Shillong which has undertaken all responsibilities in this connection. In order to run the work efficiently and successfully the Committee is now anxious to raise funds for the following purposes for which it appeals to the generous public of all creeds and colour for sympathy and co-operation and for monetary contributions for the noble cause of awakening in the people of these hills the consciousness that they are, in common with the people of the plains, the inheritors of the glorious past and the makers of future India.

The needs are as follows:

(1) Monthly recurring expenditure of Rs. 300/- for the existing institutions.

(2) Construction of a Students' Home and Ashram for the workers at Shillong which is estimated to cost about Rs. 10,000/-.

(3) Construction and reconstruction of the schools and boarding houses at the existing centres in the interior of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, and the opening of new centres at other places for which requests are being received frequently. The cost of construction is estimated to be Rs. 10,000/- for the present.

(4) Publication of books at a cost of about Rs. 2,000/-.

Any help in cash or kind will be thankfully received and acknowledged through the Press by the Secretary to the Committee. Donors contributing Rs. 1,000/- or more will be at liberty to suggest the perpetuation of the memory of their relatives and friends by having the schools, boarding-houses and Ashrams named after them. Contributions may be sent to *Birendra Kumar Mazumdar, Secretary, Laban, Shillong, Assam.*

**Vedanta Society, Portland,  
U.S.A.**

The annual meeting of the local Vedanta Society held on the 8rd December, was one of the most enjoyable since the society was first organized four years ago. It served the double purpose of celebrating the anni-

versary of the society and also establishing the work in the newly decorated rooms of the Wheeldon Annex.

The meeting was presided over by Mr. Ralph Thom, President of the Portland organization. The program committee had arranged a varied program of music, readings, and talks. One of the most enjoyable numbers was a description, by Swami Vividishananda, of some of his experiences on a pilgrimage to Manasarovar and Kailash in Tibet, the forbidden land.

This meeting was viewed by many of those present as a farewell party to Swami Prabhavananda, who is departing soon to continue his good work in Hollywood, California. However, in an intimate talk to his students during the serving of refreshments, Swami Prabhavananda said they should not look upon his leaving as a farewell, since he would continue to have an active interest in the Portland centre, and would no doubt be with this group from time to time in the future.

The new quarters are of ample proportions, attractive and comfortable, and should serve the society well during the coming winter months. Considerable thought has been given to the possibility of building a new home for the Vedanta Society in Portland, and the possibility will continue to receive the thoughtful consideration of the Board of Trustees.

The love and goodwishes of the entire society go with Swami Prabhavananda to his new field, while their loyal support and spirit of co-operation remains with Swami Vivekananda.

#### **Birthday Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda at Delhi**

"When India gets her own government, I think Swami Vivekananda will be honoured as one of the greatest men of India, I think, as the greatest man of India, whose memorial should not only be erected in bronze and marble in all the prominent places, but should also be established in our schools and colleges by giving his ideas a prominent place in our universities," said Mr. M. R. Jayakar, Bar-at-Law, M.L.A., while presiding over the 68th birthday anniversary meeting of Swami Vivekananda, held on the 9th February, Sunday, at Lachminarain, Dharamsala in Delhi. The function which was organised by the local Sri Ramakrishna-Math, opened with bands and music. In spite of the terribly inclement



weather a fairly big crowd assembled in the afternoon. Mr. Sayyad Mahammed Taqi, Advocate, proposed Mr. Jayakar to the chair. The President observed that the greatness of Swami Vivekananda was more noticeable in the West than in India. He has obtained a passport for ever for all Indians wherever he went, a passport which even the mighty government cannot secure for them. In those places one feels himself proud to be a countryman of Swami Vivekananda, for which reason he is received with utmost cordiality in all hotels, churches and societies. This Mr. Jayakar said from his personal experience. He was further of opinion that it was the illustrious Swami who gave force to *Sanātana Dharma* and placed it on a rational footing, by cleaning it of all dross that had accumulated in it during several centuries. The Swami thus raised it to that pristine purity of its early days and made it fit to be a world religion, which it is bound to be in time. The President further said that by his humble study of Hindu Philosophy he was convinced that Hinduism is no particular religion, but the receptacle of all religions,—each seer contributing to it his quota of realisation and experience, thus making it richer and broader. The President ended his speech with an appeal to the young students to nurture a spirit of culture within themselves. He was followed by Mr. M. K. Acharyya, M.L.A., Professor Rambhari of St. Stephen's College, Swami Vireswarananda, President of the Mayavati Advaita Ashrama and Swami Sharvananda, President of the Delhi Ashrama.

#### **Birthday Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda at Bangalore**

Speaking on the occasion of the birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda at the Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama at Bangalore, one of the centres of the Ramakrishna Mission, Sir Mirza Ismail, the Dewan of Mysore, observed:

"We have assembled here to-day to honour the memory of a great son of India, one who brought distinction to his motherland and raised her in the estimation of the outside world by his exemplary life and noble teachings.

"It does one good to think of Swami Vivekananda and to let one's thoughts dwell on his life and work and all that he stood for. Just as some people affect us uncomfortably, so we seem to be true to ourselves with a

truthful person, and generous-minded with a generous nature; and the world seems less disappointing and self-seeking when we think of the sweet and unselfish spirits, moving untroubled amidst life's clamour and distraction. These are our friends in the best and noblest sense. They may have lived at some distant time, we may never have met them face to face—but their light shines from afar and makes both plainer and brighter the path that we must tread.

"Vivekananda was a truly religious man. He respected all religions, for his own embraced them all. He refused to recognise any barriers either between religions or between their disciples. He exercised considerable influence over religious thought in India and outside it, especially in America, and by founding the Ramakrishna Mission he has done abiding service to his country. The Ramakrishna Mission has been the means of perpetuating his influence in India and in America. In these days of communal and religious animosities, brought about chiefly by political and economic considerations, the existence of a brotherhood like the Ramakrishna Mission, whose motto is the service of humanity, irrespective of caste or creed, is indeed a blessing. It is my fervent prayer, as I am sure it is the prayer of every patriotic Indian, that it may long flourish and that its influence may ever increase.

"The feeling that we alone are eligible for salvation and are entitled to enter the Kingdom of God, and that those professing other religions are doomed to perdition, temporary or eternal, seems ingrained in human nature. A truly enlightened man is he who entertains no such belief, who regards all men as brothers and who believes that we are all children of the same Father, each deserving of His mercy according to his own individual *Karma*. It cannot make the slightest difference to an omnipotent and omniscient Being, where and how we pray, whether we pray in church or synagogue, in temple or mosque—so long as we pray in the right spirit. This I believe, was the centre of Vivekananda's philosophy—this was his chief message to the world. I cannot conceive of a nobler feeling than this, for it at once brings all men together and unites them in their noblest aspirations. For after all, it is only the principles of Truth, Goodness and Right that are to last for ever. The forms in which they exhibit themselves will necessarily vary with the age and the state of society."

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

## DISCOURSES ON JNANA YOGA

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

The question why there cannot be eternal bodies is in itself illogical, as “body” is a term applied to a certain combination of elements, changeable and in its very nature impermanent. When we are not passing through changes, we will not have bodies (so-called). “Matter,” beyond the limit of time, space and causality, will not be matter at all. Time and space exist only in us, we are the One Permanent Being. All forms are transitory, that is why all religions say : “God has no form.” Menander was a Greco-Bactrian king. He was converted to Buddhism about 150 B.C. by one of the Buddhist missionary monks and was by them called “Milinda”. He asked a young monk, his teacher : “Can a perfect man (such as Buddha) be in error or make mistakes?” The young monk’s answer was : “The perfect man can remain in ignorance of minor matters not in his experience, but he can *never* be in error as to what his insight has actually realized. He is perfect here and now. He knows the whole mystery, the Essence of the Universe, but he may not know the mere external variations through

which that Essence is manifested in time and space. He knows the *clay* itself, but has not had experience of every shape it may be wrought into. The perfect man knows the Soul itself, but not every form and combination of its manifestation.” He would have to attain mere *relative* knowledge just as we do, though on account of his immense power, he would learn far more quickly. The tremendous “search-light” of a perfectly controlled mind, when thrown on any subject, would rapidly reduce it to possession. This is very important to be understood, because it saves so much foolish explanation as to how a Buddha or a Jesus could be mistaken in ordinary relative knowledge, as we well know they were. The disciples should not be blamed for having put down the sayings erroneously. It is humbug to say that one thing is true and another untrue in their statements. Accept the whole account, or reject it. How can we pick out the true from the false?

If a thing happens once, it can happen again. If any human being has ever realized perfection, we too can do so. If we cannot become perfect here and

now, we never can, in any state or heaven or condition we may imagine. If Jesus Christ was not perfect, then the religion bearing his name, falls to the ground. If he *was* perfect, then we too can become perfect. The perfect man does not reason or "know," as we count "knowing", for all our knowledge is mere comparison, and there is no comparison, no classification possible in the Absolute. Instinct is less liable to error than reason, but reason is higher and leads to intuition, which is higher still. Knowledge is the parent of intuition which, like instinct, is also unerring, but on a higher plane. There are three grades of manifestation in living beings : (1) sub-conscious—mechanical, unerring; (2) conscious—knowing, erring; (3) superconscious—intuitional, unerring; and these are illustrated in an animal, man and God. For the man who has become perfect, nothing remains but to apply his understanding. He lives only to help the world, desiring nothing for himself. What distinguishes, is negative,—the positive is ever wider and wider. What we have in common is the widest of all, and that is "being".

"Law is a mental shorthand, to explain a series of phenomena," but law as an entity, so to speak, does not exist. We use the word to express the regular succession of certain occurrences in the phenomenal world. We must not let law become a superstition, a something inevitable, to which we must submit. Error must accompany reason, but the very struggle to conquer error makes us gods. Disease is the struggle of nature to cast out something wrong; so sin is the struggle of the Divine in us to throw off the animal. We must "sin" (that is, make mistake) in order to rise to Godhood.

Do not pity anyone. Look upon all as your equals, cleanse yourself of the primal sin of inequality. We are all

equal and must not think : "I am good and you are bad, and I am trying to reclaim you." Equality is the sign of the free. Jesus came to publicans and sinners and lived with them. He never set himself on a pedestal. Only sinners see sin. See not man, see only the Lord. We manufacture our own heaven and can make a heaven even in hell. Sinners are only to be found in hell, and as long as we see them around us, we are there ourselves. Spirit is not in time, nor in space. Realize "I am Existence absolute, Knowledge absolute, Bliss absolute—I am He, I am He." Be glad at birth, be glad at death, rejoice always in the love of God. Get rid of the bondage of body; we have become slaves to it and learnt to hug our chains and love our slavery; so much so that we long to perpetuate it, and go on with "body," "body" for ever. Do not cling to the idea of "body", do not look for a future existence in any way like this one; do not love or want the body, even of those dear to us. This life is our teacher, and dying only makes room to begin over again. Body is our schoolmaster, but to commit suicide is folly, it is only killing the "schoolmaster". Another will take his place. So until we have learnt to transcend the body, we must have it, and losing one, will get another. Still, we must not identify ourselves with the body, but look upon it only as an instrument to use, in reaching perfection. Sri Ramakrishna summed up his philosophy in these words : "When I identify myself with the body, O Lord, I am Thy creature, eternally separate from Thee. When I identify myself with the soul, I am a spark of that Divine Fire which Thou art. But when I identify myself with the Atman, I and Thou art one!" Therefore the Jñāni strives to realize the Self and nothing else.

## AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA TO SISTER CHRISTINE

THE MATH, BELUR

July 6, 1901.

Things come to me by fits—to-day I am in a fit of writing. The first thing to do is, therefore, to pen a few lines to you. I am known to be nervous, I worry much; but it seems, dear Christine, you are not far behind in that trick. One of our poets says: "Even the mountains will fly, the fire will be cold, yet the heart of the great will never change." I am small, very, but I know you are great, and my faith is always in your true heart. *I worry about everything except you.* I have dedicated you to the Mother. She is your shield, your guide. No harm can reach you—nothing hold you down a minute, I know it.

Ever yours in the Lord,  
VIVEKANANDA

### A BRINJAL-SELLER APPRAISES A DIAMOND

By THE EDITOR

I

Sri Ramakrishna often used to tell the following parable:

A rich man once sent his servant with a diamond to have it appraised at the market. He first sent him to a brinjal-seller. The brinjal-seller, when he saw the diamond, said: "Well, it is a fine piece of glass. I can offer nine seers of brinjals in exchange for it." The servant asked him to offer a higher price. But the man was inexorable. He said: "I have already quoted the highest price. I cannot offer a single fruit more." The servant next went to a cloth merchant who offered nine yards of cloth for the diamond. Thus the diamond was taken round the whole market and everyman gave his quotation according to his understanding. Lastly he took the diamond to a jeweller who at once offered for it a hundred thousand rupees.

The meaning of the parable is obvious.

Lately we met an astute "brinjal-seller" in the pages of *The Modern*

*Review*. He came across a "diamond" and has evaluated it at only "nine seers of brinjals". The gentleman in question is Mr. Mahesh Chandra Ghosh. The "diamond" is Sri Ramakrishna. In the February number of *The Modern Review* he has attempted an estimation of the personality and teachings of the great Master in course of a review of the two volumes of *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* by M., and his conclusions literally bear out the truth of the Master's parable. He began very nicely, and we almost thought that he was a shrewd "jeweller," and would offer an adequate price for the "diamond." But very soon he belied our hopes and declared that he would not pay a single "brinjal" more than "nine seers."

Our readers, that is to say, those of them who have not read the original article of Mr. Ghosh, may be interested to know his conclusions about Sri Ramakrishna. These are as follows: "He was a simple child of nature: indeed there was 'no guile' in him—he

was all innocence. He was a 'god-intoxicated' man. He was an incarnation of the spirit of Chaitanya. His ecstatic devotion (*Bhakti*) was alone sufficient to attract devotees to his side or to his feet. He was a selfless man; his path was the 'Path of Renunciation'. He was above all types of sectarianism. His catholicity and universal toleration endeared him to all who came in contact with him." But, Sri Ramakrishna's worship and realisation of Kali was a self-delusion. His visions were self-projected hallucinations. His *Samādhi* was not really union with God, but merely a concentration of mind. His idea of *Nāma-japa* was mistaken; in fact, his repetition of the name of Kali did not produce any spiritual condition, but only a vacuity of mind. His understanding and criticism of Brahmo-worship were wrong. He was no Divine Incarnation. And he made no disciples.

One wonders what remains of the greatness of Sri Ramakrishna after these qualifying clauses. Surely his *Samādhi*, God-visions, *Shākta* realisations, etc., were some of the essential elements of his spiritual greatness. If we eliminate them, Sri Ramakrishna becomes empty and inane. What kind of God-intoxication or *Bhakti* is that which has not culminated in mystic realisations? Mr. Ghosh denies the essence to Sri Ramakrishna and praises the shell. But let us take the points raised by him one by one and see how far they can stand examination.

## II

He begins with the *Shakti*-worship of Sri Ramakrishna. He quotes a few passages from *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* in which Sri Ramakrishna speaks of *Shakti*, and says that they are inconsistent. One who is not versed in the *Shakti*-cult and its philosophy, may be excused if he fails to appreciate the underlying unity of the different conceptions of *Shakti* as ex-

pressed in Sri Ramakrishna's different utterances. But he can never be forgiven bad logic, if he claims to be a critic. The writer admits that Sri Ramakrishna sometimes considers *Shakti* as identical with the Absolute, though at other times he appears to distinguish the one from the other. From this Mr. Ghosh concludes: (The meaning of *Shakti*-worship is now clear. *Shakti* is at the root of all evils; she is an object of terror." This is strange logic. Mr. Ghosh quotes Sri Ramakrishna as saying that *Shakti* has two aspects: *Vidyā* and *Avidyā*, and that it is identical with *Brahman* noumenally and phenomenally. How does Mr. Ghosh's strange conclusion follow from this? Sri Ramakrishna described *Shakti* in many different aspects, and in this he did nothing original. The whole *Shakti* cult does so. And if Mr. Ghosh wants to know the explanation of those descriptions, he must study the *Tantra* literature. *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* is not a treatise on *Shakti*-worship, but a record of certain conversations, that is all; and conversations do not necessarily give philosophical delineations of subjects dwelt upon. It is all a matter of chance. What wonder if Mr. Ghosh does not find a philosophical treatment of the *Shakti* cult in the *Gospel* (supposing that it is not there)?

The strange logic of Mr. Ghosh may appear astounding to those who have been wont to consider him a scholar. But its explanation is not far to seek. This wonderful inference was necessary for substantiating the *dénouement*. He continues: "Gradually Paramahansa succeeded in getting rid of the influence of *Shakti*, and his attitude towards her became defiant and abusive." Such a categorical statement, when it was against *all* current knowledge about Sri Ramakrishna, would certainly require very strong evidence to support it. But Mr. Ghosh has nothing more than a quotation from a Bengali book written by one Trailokya Nath Deb who reports Sri Ramakrishna

as saying: "For a long time that *shāli* (sister-in-law—meaning Kali) led me astray and did not show me the right path. I do not therefore see her face." The evidence of the disciples of Sri Ramakrishna who were with him for years and to the last moment, is all false! Sri Ramakrishna's realisations of the Divine Mother before he met that wonderful witness of Mr. Ghosh were all illusion! The teachings about *Shakti* that he imparted to his disciples who practised accordingly and realised the Mother, were all wrong and false! The evidence of other Brahmos is also false! A certain obscure writer is alone true! Only a strong prejudice can produce such a line of reasoning.

Here is Mr. Ghosh's conclusion: "If we understand his interpretation of *Shakti* and the object of *Shakti*-worship, we shall not be surprised at this attitude of his towards *Shakti*. He saw no utility in *Shakti*-worship." How croneous this conclusion is, and how unreliable his authority—the above-mentioned Trailokya Nath Deb—would be clear from the following. Mr. Ghosh himself says regarding M.'s *Gospel*: We cannot vouch for the historical accuracy of all the facts, but we believe that most of the sayings of the saint are correctly recorded in the book." We shall, therefore, give a few references from M.'s *Gospel* in proof of our statement. The incident recorded in Trailokya Nath Deb's book is mentioned by him to have taken place at Dakshineswar. But there are many devotional and respectful references to Kali in the conversations recorded of the days after he finally left Dakshineswar. Space forbids us to reproduce the relevant passages here. We can only give references to the Bengali edition of the *Gospel*—*Sri Sri Rāmakrishna-Kāthāmrita*. See 1st Vol., (10th edition), pp. 258, 279, 288, 293; 3rd Vol., (2nd edition), pp. 235, 236, 260-267; and 4th Vol., (2nd edition), pp. 304, 324, 325. Of these we would like to draw the special attention of Mr. Ghosh to the last reference of the 3rd

Vol. It is a description of the celebration of the annual festival of Kali while Sri Ramakrishna was staying at Shyampukur. The Master had asked M. to buy two books of *Shākta* songs by Ramprasad and Kamalakanta, two famous Bengali saints of Kali, in order to present them to Dr. Mahendra Lal Sircar. He also asked him to arrange for the worship of Kali at night. How the worship was celebrated and what a wonderful experience came to the devotees that night, are all described in detail in *Sri Sri Rāmakrishna-Kāthāmrita*. We may also refer him to *Sri Sri Rāmakrishna-Līlā-prasāga* by Swami Saradananda, another direct disciple of the Master and an eye-witness of the events. [See *Divyabhāva*, (1st edition), pp. 336-340]. We may give another reference from Swami Saradananda's book. The incident mentioned there also occurred after Sri Ramakrishna's departure from Dakshineswar. Swami Saradananda was an eye-witness of the incident. [See pp. 159-164 of *Sādhakabhāva*, (2nd edition)]:

It was the occasion of the *Durgā Pujā*. Surendra Nath Mitra, a disciple of the Master, was worshipping the Divine Mother at his own house. Surendra was sad at heart that the Master, being ill, would not be able to attend in person. It was the second day of the worship. In the evening many people, including Narendra and Dr. Sircar, were assembled in the room of Sri Ramakrishna. The music of Narendra created a divine atmosphere in the room, and everybody was caught in its influence. The Master repeatedly fell into trances and in the intervals exchanged one or two words with the doctor. The clock struck half past seven, and the most auspicious moment of the day—the *Sandhi*, as it is called—arrived. The doctor was about to take his leave and Sri Ramakrishna also stood up to bid him good-bye. Suddenly the Master fell into deep *Samādhi*. The devotees began to whisper that it was due to the special sanctity of the hour. The doctor took his seat again to see what

would happen next. About half an hour after, Sri Ramakrishna returned to his normal consciousness and related to his devotees what he had just experienced. He said: "I saw that a luminous path opened up between this place and Surendra's house. I found that through Surendra's devotion the Mother was manifest in the image—Her third eye shooting forth a divine light. The usual series of lamps were burning in front. And Surendra was weeping bitterly before the Mother, sitting in the courtyard. You had better go there. He will be comforted to see you." Accordingly, Narendra and the other devotees went to Surendra's house and learnt upon inquiry that everything the Master had said was true. The coincidence filled them with joy and surprise.

We shall also refer Mr. Ghosh to pp. 80-81 of *Gurubhāva*, 1st Vol. (2nd edition), containing a description of his prayer to Divine Mother for a slight relief of his throat-trouble and the reply he received from Her. The incident took place at Cossipore long after he had left Dakshineswar.

We do not know if these evidences would recommend themselves to Mr. Ghosh. But only a prejudiced mind can refuse them in favour of an obscure statement. Of course it is unnecessary to explain Sri Ramakrishna's alleged application of the epithet *shālī* to Mother Kali,—for when the whole report appears to be unauthenticated, a part of it does not require special examination until corroborative evidence in its favour is available.

### III

The world has all along thought that Sri Ramakrishna realised the Truth at the first instance through *Shakti*-worship. Mr. Ghosh has disabused it of this idea. The world also believes that he used to have constant *Samādhi* in which he used to be united with God. Let us see what Mr. Ghosh has got to say about Sri Ramakrishna's *Samādhi*.

At the outset, he learnedly opines: "Ordinary men are under the impression that *Samādhi* means 'union with God'. That is not the fact. Even in non-theistic systems, there is *Samādhi*. It is simply 'deep concentration of the mind'. In lower forms of *Samādhi* there are thought processes but in higher stages, *Samādhi* becomes non-cognitive or ultra-cognitive." He makes a distinction between "concentration of mind" and "union with God," as if union with God is quite different from all kinds of mental concentration. Anyone who knows anything of spiritual practice, knows that the more the mind is concentrated, the more the higher states of consciousness emerge and union with God is nothing but the realisation of the highest states of consciousness. Yet why did Mr. Ghosh make a distinction between mental concentration and union with God? Was it to imply that Sri Ramakrishna's *Samādhi* was not really union with God?

Mr. Ghosh makes another mistake. He says that Sri Ramakrishna was a *Bhakta*. No, he was also a *Jnāni*. He trained Narendra (Swami Vivekananda) in the path of *Jnāna*. Narendra himself said so. And how could he teach *Jnāna* unless he was a *Jnāni* himself? The reason why he did not like to lose himself in *Samādhi*, was that he wanted to fulfil his mission among men, which would not have been possible if he had not dwelt on the plane of normal consciousness. Sri Ramakrishna himself explained it so. Mr. Ghosh writes: "It is said that one day he plunged in *Bhāva* and said—'Om! Om! Om! Mother what is this I am saying! O Mother, do not plunge me in the knowledge of Brahman and take away my consciousness! Do not give me Brahma-jnana, I am but thy child. I have fears and anxieties! I do want my Mother! A thousand salutations to Brahma-jnana! Give it to him who wants it, O Mother! Anandamayee! O Mother Blissful!'" From this he concludes: "Ramkrishna never liked to

lose self-consciousness in *Samādhi*, the very idea terrified him." A man who remained for six long months in *Nirvikalpa Samādhi*, afraid of it! We have reasons to believe that Mr. Ghosh has studied the volumes of Swami Saradananda on Sri Ramakrishna. Why did he ignore the luminous passage in page 63 of *Gurubhāva*, 1st vol., (2nd edition)? Sri Ramakrishna himself explained his attitude towards *Nirvikalpa Samādhi* to his disciples. Writes Swami Saradananda: "The Master himself has said to us many times: 'The natural tendency of my mind is upwards (towards *Nirvikalpa Samādhi*). When once it is plunged in *Samādhi*, it does not want to come down. I bring it down forcibly for your sakes. And as I do not have the power to come down unless I take hold of some lower desires, I raise such little desires in the mind as 'I shall smoke,' 'I shall drink water,' 'I shall take soup,' 'I shall see so and so,' 'I shall talk,' etc. and repeat them again and again in the mind, and thus does the mind come down (to the body). Sometimes while coming down, it soars directly high up again, and I have again to lure it downwards by means of such desires.' " It will be clear from this why Sri Ramakrishna did not like to soar into *Nirvikalpa Samādhi*.

Mr. Ghosh next deals with Sri Ramakrishna's visions. He finds them of doubtful value. He cites some instances of his visions and gives the opinions of believers, sceptics, psychologists, logicians, *Vedāntic* monists, and modern mystics about such visions. He concedes that some of his visions may be true. But generally speaking, he considers them illusory. Two main arguments seem to have been put forward in support: the psychologist's and the logician's views. We have little to say about them. But what strikes us is that all over the world whoever experience such visions, consider them to be true, while those who do not themselves experience them, sit in judgment and declare them to be

false. We wonder if Mr. Ghosh ever saw such a vision. If he had, he would have known better than citing glibly the so-called psychologists and logicians. People like Mr. Ghosh have always their explanations of experiences which they are never privileged to have. It may be that visions are projections of thoughts. But what kind of thought? And do we consider what that implies? Is not the world of our normal experience equally the projection of our mind? Does that take away from its reality? The real test of the truth of a vision is the *sense of reality* that accompanies it, and the *condition* of the mind that experiences it. The test is absolutely an inner one. No impertinent intellectual has any power to judge it from the outside. He alone knows who experiences. A sense of intense reality and heightening of consciousness accompany a true vision. One feels uplifted high above his normal level, a divine joy often fills his heart, and the effect of these become more or less lasting in his life. We ordinary men can judge the visions only indirectly: if he is a man of pure and unselfish character, if he can lift us up spiritually, if he radiates an atmosphere of intense power and holiness, we know he is a true man, his vision cannot be false. For it has been found that such a state is realised by a person only when he is above all *rajas*, and full of *sattva*, and it is well-known that *sattva* never causes error. Mr. Ghosh frightens us by citing modern psychologists, sceptics, modern mystics, etc., as if they are all *proved* authorities on the point at discussion. Even Mr. Ghosh knows that they are not such.

His logical argument is indeed a nice one: A must be observed to have become B! He says: "God who is supposed to appear as something material, is not known and can never be an object of observation." First of all, nobody says that God becomes something *material*. Secondly, it is wrong to suppose that God is unknown. It is not that in God-vision, form comes



first to be judged logically whether its substance is Divine or not. Both the Divine consciousness and the awareness of form blend into one single experience. Awareness of God, whether He is considered to have form or not, is an inner experience. If that experience comes to one associated with a particular form, one knows that that form is Divine. The point to be considered is not form or formlessness, but the actual inner certitude of God-awareness. No syllogism can test it. It is absolutely subjective. Saints and sages in India and elsewhere have declared again and again that the state of Divine consciousness may be realised even in conjunction with certain forms. Mr. Ghosh is well-versed in Indian philosophy and religious literature. Does he not remember that intellect is insufficient to gauge the secrets of those ethereal heights? Elsewhere he declares that the Brahmo ideal is to realise the Noumenon in phenomena. Quite a nice aspiration. But how is that possible, if God cannot be realised in forms? Phenomena also, we think, are forms. But perhaps if we see God in sun, stars, moon, flowers, wife, or child, that is correct God-vision; but if we see Him in the forms of Kali, Vishnu or Krishna, that is all wrong! Does our critic suppose that all forms are contained in the world of senses and that there are no forms beyond it?

He refers to Sri Ramakrishna's use of a vulgar word (*shâlâ* lit. brother-in-law, a term of abuse or familiarity) after a divine vision and to his anger with a certain person who caused him some worry, and considers them proof enough of the vision being of a low order. Mr. Ghosh must acquire more experience before he can judge these things. He must associate with persons who have truly realised God and observe their behaviour with a pure, unbiased mind. Then only would he know how a man of God-realisation behaves. Such anger and use of (from the common standpoint) vulgar language as Sri Ramakrishna's, are possible even after

a high realisation. It is stupid to think that for Sri Ramakrishna the word *shâlâ* had any vulgar association, or that anger with him was real anger. Mr. Ghosh forgets here what he himself said of Sri Ramakrishna in the beginning, that "He was a simple child of nature: indeed there was 'no guile' in him—he was all innocence." Some of our countrymen have developed an excessive puritanism in speech, we know. But that puritanism should not be made the standard of judging all men and things.

The vision in question is this: Hazrah, a devotee who lived at the Dakshineswar Temple, accused Sri Ramakrishna of too much attachment to his boy-disciples. This made Sri Ramakrishna anxious and he prayed to the Divine Mother. And as he prayed he saw a vision,—She Herself had become men and She manifested Herself most clearly in a pure soul. When he came down a little from the *Samâdhi*, he felt much annoyed with Hazrah. He said: "The fellow (*shâlâ*) made me miserable!" But then he thought: "How can I blame the poor man? How is he to know?" Mr. Ghosh thus remarks on the vision: "The vision which he saw is *certainly* a vision created by desire for and attachment to earthly companions." (Note the word italicised by us).

But we shall present Mr. Ghosh with two little incidents from the Master's life which would confound even his omniscience. Mr. Ghosh has said: "The *Samâdhi*, returning from which a man can be angry and can use such abusive language as *shâlâ* is a *Samâdhi* of a low order." Very good. But if one's anger is at once followed by *Samâdhi*, what will Mr. Ghosh think of that anger? What kind of anger is that which causes one to soar up to God-consciousness? Let us narrate the incident. Its authority is the nephew of Sri Ramakrishna who is still living at Dakshineswar. To quote his words: "At about 9 or 10 in the morning, after the Master had finished his talks with

the devotees, I would rub oil on his body, and only with his special permission, put oil on his head. One day, I had put my hand on his head in order to smear his hair with oil, without asking his permission. He got very angry and went to strike me and at once plunged into *Samādhi*. I was struck dumb with wonder, and my heart began to quake with fear. A long time after he heaved a deep sigh and came down to consciousness. He then said: 'Do not put your hand on my head in this way. There is no knowing in what spiritual condition I may be in. Ask for permission before you touch my head.' " How does Mr. Ghosh estimate this strange kind of anger?

The other incident is yet more illuminating. For it refers to the same accusation of Hazra about his attachment to his boy-disciples. This time he answered it in a very startling fashion: One day Hazra took the Master to task, saying: "Why do you think so much of Narendra and Rakhal? Why do you not dwell constantly in God?" "See how I dwell in Him," said Sri Ramakrishna and at once plunged into *Samādhi*. His beard and hair on the head and the body stood on end, and he remained in this state for an hour. Ramlal, Sri Ramakrishna's nephew, recited the names of God in his ears and gradually brought him down to the normal state. Then Sri Ramakrishna said to Ramlal: "Did you see what is meant by dwelling in God? That is why I keep my mind down by thinking of and loving Narendra, Rakhal and others. I look upon them as veritable *Nārāyanas*." Ramlal said: "It is best you live in your own way."

Does not Mr. Ghosh think that he should make a more sparing use of the word "certainly"?

#### IV

Mr. Ghosh's next consideration is Sri Ramakrishna's relations with the Brahmo Samaj. He first tries to show that the Brahmo Samaj did not borrow the idea of worshipping God as Mother

from Sri Ramakrishna and quotes a few references in proof. These references may be correct. But we must say that the occasions on which Brahmos addressed God as Mother in the days before they knew Sri Ramakrishna, were very few and casual, and the Brahmo Samaj as a whole did not worship God in those days as Mother. But a remarkable change came over it after Keshab's intimacy with Sri Ramakrishna. Under the circumstances it is only casuistry to say that the Brahmo Samaj did not borrow it from Sri Ramakrishna. We have dealt with this point in details in a Note in December, 1929.

Mr. Ghosh then dwells on the sense of sin of some of the Brahmos. And he remarks: "Too much thinking of one's own weakness paralyses one's power of resistance. This may be well exemplified by incidents from the life of Ramkrishna himself. He would continually think and speak of the danger of *Kamini-Kanchana* (women and gold, i.e., money). We firmly believe that he was above these temptations. But his continual thinking on the subject made him extremely nervous and produced in him a sense of imaginary danger. He could not touch metallic pots or plates; contact with them gave him a shock and pain in the hand, as if he were stung with a poisonous fang. Whatever might be the explanation given by Ramkrishna himself or his followers, the psychological explanation is that subconsciously he felt himself insecure and in constant danger of succumbing to their evil influence. *Kamini-Kanchana* became his nightmare and 'daymare'. The continual harping on the temptations created a false atmosphere of insecurity. The following is another example. And old maid-servant of the temple of Dakshineswar once saluted him by touching his feet. At once he stood up, uttering 'Govinda', 'Govinda', startled and tortured as it were by a scorpion-sting and hurried up panting to where a jar of Ganges water stood in a corner and washed those parts of the feet which

the maid-servant had touched. In mute wonder the devotees witnessed that strange happening and the maid-servant sat deeply mortified. Here also the explanation is the same as before. It is a typical case of self-created neurosis." Sri Ramakrishna did not understand himself, nor did his disciples who lived with him for years and studied him closely. But Mr. Ghosh who presumably never saw him and whose only knowledge of him is based on a biased study of a few books, has understood him! Psychology is very handy to him. But even psychologising must take all facts into account. In passing a categorical judgment he forgets to take the following facts into consideration :

(1) Sri Ramakrishna himself had no fear of danger from any woman for he saw the Divine Mother even in prostitutes. Says Swami Vivekananda in his *My Master* : "I myself have seen this man standing before those women whom society would not touch, and falling at their feet bathed in tears, saying : 'Mother, in one form Thou art in the street, and in another form Thou art the Universe. I salute Thee, Mother, I salute Thee.' Think of the blessedness of that life from which all carnality has vanished, which can look upon every woman with that love and reverence, when every woman's face becomes transfigured, and only the face of the Divine Mother, the Blissful One, the Protectress of the human race, shines upon it!" We shall quote another instance on the authority of Swami Premananda, one of the prominent monastic disciples of the Master. He said : "One day the ladies of Balaram Babu's family were sitting before the Master in his room, when a prostitute named Ramani passed along a road close by. The Master called out to her and asked : 'Why don't you come nowadays?' The ladies were scandalised to hear the Master talking with a prostitute. Shortly after, the Master took them to visit the shrines. When they reached the Kali temple,

the Master addressed the Mother saying : 'Mother, Thou indeed hast become the prostitute Ramani! Thou hast become both the prostitute and the chaste woman!' The ladies understood that they were wrong in hating Ramani, that the Master spoke with her knowing her to be the Mother Herself, and that they had nothing to be unusually proud of their chastity, for it was all due to Her will. The prostitute Ramani has now become a great devotee and sheds tears in remembrance of the Master." In the *Gospel*, 2nd vol., (1st edition), p. 58, the following conversation occurs between the Master and a devotee. It gives the Master's own explanation of his attitude towards women?

"A Devotee : Sir, should we then hate women?

Sri R : He who has seen God, does not see woman with a different eye that he will fear her. He sees clearly that women are so many parts of Brahmayee, and so he worships them as Mother Herself!"

(2) He used to talk long and mix intimately with the lady devotees. Numerous instances of this can be quoted. We shall quote here one only. This is taken from Swami Saradananda's *Lilā-Prasānga*. The Swami quotes a lady disciple of the Master as saying : "Now all say that he did not allow any woman to touch or approach him. When we hear this, we laugh and think that we are not yet dead. Who can know how kind he was? He had the same attitude towards men and women. But he could not long endure the society of women. If they stayed long with him he would ask them to go to visit the temples. We have heard him tell the same thing also to men." Mr. Ghosh is, we know, omniscient. He knows that in Sri Ramakrishna's subconscious mind he felt insecure. But why then did he thus allow women devotees to come to him? Why did he often go to the inner apartments of many devoted families of Calcutta and mix freely with the ladies?

(3) He slept for many months in the same bed with his wife without feeling the least nervous or being the least affected in the mind thereby.

(4) The touch of every woman did not cause him pain in the way cited in the example mentioned by Mr. Ghosh. Only impure characters used to produce it.

If Mr. Ghosh's explanation be correct, how can we explain the above facts? It is clear that he had no sense of danger from women, conscious or subconscious, for he saw in every woman, good or bad, only the Divine Mother. We cannot say that he developed a sort of automatic habit in his attitude towards women. For when he wished, he could sleep in the same bed with his wife. How then can we call it neurosis? He did not feel any pain when touched by a pure woman. On the other hand, if an impure man also touched him, he felt the same excruciating pain. We may mention here one relevant incident of Sri Ramakrishna's life, as narrated by Swami Saradananda in *Gurubhāva*, 1st vol., (2nd edition), pp. 11-12. On one occasion a man suffering from white leprosy approached the Master with the prayer that he pass his hand over the diseased parts, by which he hoped he would be cured of his disease. The Master took pity on the man and said: "I do not know anything about this. But since you ask me, I shall pass my hand over them. The disease will be cured if Mother so wills." And he did so. But as a result he had such terrible pain throughout the day in his hand that he prayed to the Divine Mother that he would never again act in that way. The Master said afterwards: "The man was cured, but this (i.e., his own) body underwent his suffering." Here is another instance on the authority of Swami Brahmananda, a prominent direct disciple of the Master, who lived long with him at Dakshineswar: "One day the son of a public woman came to Dakshineswar. The Master was sleeping in his room. The

man entered and touched his feet. The Master at once started up, as if some one had thrown fire on him. He said: 'Tell me frankly all the sins that you have committed. If you cannot, go to the Ganges and speak them out loudly. You will be freed from them.' But the man was ill-fated, he could not." Evidently then, our critic's conclusion that it was neurosis, arising out of a subconscious sense of insecurity, is wrong. The cause must be sought elsewhere. Why he warned male devotees against women and gold and women devotees against men and gold, is a different question altogether. He himself gave his reasons clearly. Mr. Ghosh may accept his views or may not. But to describe Sri Ramakrishna's own attitude towards Kāmini-Kāñchana as neurosis, is the height of complacent ignorance.

Sri Ramakrishna used to say that the essence of spiritual practice was "to make the mind and mouth one," i.e., one must practise by thought, word and deed whatever one considered to be right. We know how our actions and professions differ. Sri Ramakrishna was not of our kind. Whatever he thought wrong, he gave up instantly and completely and for ever. And this renunciation was so perfect that not only his conscious mind, but his subconscious mind, nervous system, muscles, all responded to it. And this is what it should be. If the mind and body are our instruments, as our philosophies and the sages have often told us, they must be fully obedient to our wishes. That they are not so in our case, is proof that our mind and body are beyond our control and we are weak. In Sri Ramakrishna's case they were completely at his service. From this the ordinary man would infer that they should respond only to so-called voluntary or conscious thoughts. This is a great mistake. Our ego is related to the conscious mind only. Not so the ego of men like Sri Ramakrishna. We are in our present condition only our lower self. But Sri Ramakrishna and

men like him are both the lower and the higher selves and more the latter. Thus if his lower self ever acted in a way which was against the wish of the higher self, his mind and body at once responded to the latter's wish and obstructed the action. Here the action was not involuntary, but it was controlled by the will of the higher self. Our lower self presides over only an infinitesimal part of our mental and physical system. But the higher self over the whole. Thus it happened sometimes that when the lower self of Sri Ramakrishna wanted to act in a certain way, his mind and body resisted it. This higher self is nothing different from God, and is omniscient and omnipotent.

We shall cite a few illustrations :

(1) When his mother died, he wanted to make oblations of water (*Tarpana*) to his deceased mother. But as soon as he tried to do this, his fingers became stiff and parted so that all water dropped out of his palms. He tried several times but with the same result. Later on he learnt that according to the scriptures in a certain stage of spiritual development, a man cannot perform these ceremonial actions. Besides he was a *Sannyāsin* and thus precluded from performing any rites.

(2) Says Swami Vivekananda in *My Master* : "He threw away all the little property he had, and took a vow that he would never touch money, and this one idea, 'I will not touch money,' became a part of him. It may appear to be something occult, but even in after-life, when he was sleeping, if I touched him with a piece of money his hand would become bent, and his whole body would become, as it were, paralysed." To give a specific incident : One day when the Master was absent in Calcutta, Narendra came to Dakshineswar. Finding there was no one in his room, a desire arose in his mind to test the Master's renunciation of wealth. He took out a rupee from his pocket and secreted it under his bed. He then went to the Panchavati for meditation.

After a while Sri Ramakrishna returned. He proceeded to the bed, but as soon as he touched it he started back in great pain. Wondering, he was looking round, when Narendra came in and watched his plight silently. An attendant hastened to examine the bed, which disclosed the presence of a rupee. Both the attendant and the Master were surprised. Narendra silently walked out of the room.

(8) The Master often suffered from stomach trouble. One day when he went on a visit to S. Sambhu Charan Mallick who lived in a garden-house close by, the latter advised him to take a little opium to cure his disease and asked him to take some from him that day when he returned to the Temple. But at the time of departure Sri Ramakrishna forgot it and did not remember it till he was well on his way. He returned to Mallik's house, but found that Sambhu Mallik had gone to the inner apartments. He did not send for him, but took the opium from one of his officers and started towards the Temple. But as soon as he came on the public road, he felt confused, he could not see his way and some force seemed to pull his legs towards the ditch by the road. Thinking that he might have lost his way, he looked back towards Mallik's garden, the road there-to was clearly visible. He returned to the garden-gate and again proceeded carefully towards the Temple. But before he had proceeded a few steps, he again lost his way and he felt his legs again being pulled towards the ditch. Then suddenly Sri Ramakrishna remembered that Sambhu had asked him to take opium from himself. His taking it from an officer was, therefore, a false action and theft. He hastened back to Sambhu's house, and finding that the officer was also gone, he threw the packet of opium through a window into a room, crying that he had left it there and turned back towards the Temple. This time he saw his way quite clear. (This is on Swami Saradananda's authority).

(4) Here is another incident on the authority of Swami Premananda : "Seeing that the Master liked lemon much, Yogin (Swami Yogananda) used to bring him a lemon every day. One day the Master said to him : 'Wherefrom did you get the lemon yesterday? I could not take it.' Yogin knew that the Master could not eat things brought from low and impure persons. But he had brought the lemon from the same plant from which he had brought the other lemons. Why was it, then, that the Master could not take it? Yogin felt much perturbed and began to search for the cause. After a careful enquiry he came to know that the orchard from which he used to bring the fruits, had changed hands on the day previous to the incident,—the lease had expired. Yogin received permission to get the fruits from the former lessee. On that particular day, therefore, that permission did not avail, and it was really a theft, though unconscious."

(5) One day Sri Ramakrishna went to the house of a gentleman in Calcutta and there asked for a drink of water. But when the glass of water was brought, he could not take it. Swami Vivekananda who was with him, carefully examined the water,—it was very pure and the glass also was clean. He was mystified. He knew that Sri Ramakrishna could not take anything touched by an impure person. He privately enquired who had touched the water. He came to learn that the master of the house had touched it while it was being taken to the Master, (though the Master himself had not seen it) and he was a licentious character.

(6) One day when Sri Ramakrishna was in *Samādhi* and appeared to be falling down, a disciple who was near by, came to hold him. But no sooner had he touched him than Sri Ramakrishna gave out a yell of excruciating pain. The disciple felt that his contact had caused the Master to cry out in that way and he at once took off his hands. The disciple was one of the most favourite of the Master and he had

been often declared by him to be of very pure character. When enquiry began for the reason of this incident, it was found that the disciple had an unhealed wound due to an operation on his head. That was why his touch had caused the Master so much pain. For it is said in the scriptures that no one with sores on his body can touch a sacred image, and the Master's body in *Samādhi* was certainly as filled with the living presence of God as any sacred image. The disciple had touched the Master in his normal mood without any untoward effect. But in *Samādhi*, it produced a different effect. Thenceforth the disciple never touched the Master while he was in a super-normal state, until his wound was completely cured.

The Master also said : "I am sometimes in a condition in which I cannot touch anyone. If any of them (*pointing to the disciples*) then touches me, I cry out in pain." And again : "There is another ecstatic mood, in which I can touch only Baburam. If he then holds me, I do not feel any pain. . . ."

In the above instances, there is no question of constant thinking of possible dangers. He simply did not know that there were any causes for danger in these. And yet his mental and physical system reacted. How does Mr. Ghosh's theory of self-created neurosis explain it? Psychologically (Mr. Ghosh must excuse us for encroaching upon his special domain), Sri Ramakrishna's reaction in the instances quoted by him and his reaction in the instances quoted above, is the same. We must, therefore, find one single reason to explain both these sets of cases. Mr. Ghosh's explanation fails. Let him now judge if Sri Ramakrishna's own explanation or that of his disciples is correct or not.

Mr. Ghosh learnedly proclaims that "when a normal saint sees a woman, he sees a human creature." But can a human being be *perceived* without its sex? A human being must be per-

ceived as either man or woman. A human being may exist in the region of concepts, but not of percepts. We have to perceive a human being either as beyond humanity, i.e., as spirit or

Divinity or as man or woman. There is no 'middle path'. We are curious to know who that normal saint of Mr. Ghosh is who sees only human being and not man or woman.

(To be concluded)

## THE DIARY OF A DISCIPLE

OCTOBER 9, 1919.

It was 3 p.m. Swami Turiyananda was reclining in an easy chair in the veranda of his room in the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service at Benares. A Brahmachâri was fanning him. The hard austerities practised for years had broken the Swami's health, and diabetes had completed the breakdown. So he had to come to Benares for a change.

The disciple came with C., who after saluting the Swami enquired about his health.

Swami: "At present I am doing pretty well. Just after my coming here, I had two successive attacks of influenza, which weakened me much. Fortunately Doctor S. who treated me in Calcutta happened to be at Benares on business. On seeing me he remarked that the change at Benares might not prove effective. At that time the symptoms of my old asthma were also evident."

Disciple: "You look better than on the *Astami Pujâ* day when I saw you last. I think it is better that the effect of change is gradual rather than immediate. When Baburam Maharaj (Swami Premananda) went to Deoghar he improved much in the beginning. But the improvement did not last."

Swami: "Yes. Perhaps it was wrong to bring him down to Calcutta. He had an attack of influenza on the way attended with double pneumonia. On his arrival at Calcutta, Sarat Maharaj (Swami Saradananda) remarked: 'He is done for.' He did not die of his previous illness."

C: "You well know, Maharaj, that we are engrossed with the world. Pray tell us how we can reach Him."

Swami: "There is no fixed means of attaining God. Sri Ramakrishna used to say: 'A man can be truly sincere by virtue of merits acquired in many past lives.' Swamiji nicely said: 'God is not a commodity like fish or vegetable to be had for a certain price.' The sages have stated in the *Shâstras* the several paths by which they reached God. One has stated that one should perform *pujâ* in such and such a way. Another that one should practise *japa*. And so on. Narada says: 'Just as the river flows intently towards the sea in order to meet it, without deviating its course to any other direction, even so he who seeks God should move towards Him and Him alone giving up all other concerns.' It is said in the *Gîtâ*: 'Persons who, meditating on Me as non-separate, worship Me in all beings, to them thus steadfast wholly and constantly, I carry what they lack and preserve what they already have.'

"There are two forms of *Bhakti* (devotion): Firstly, the ritualistic or obligatory devotion, such as, one should practise so much *japa* or one should perform *pujâ* in such and such a way. Then there is the loving devotion. At this stage the devotee thinks ardently of God. He finds no pleasure in things unrelated to God. Above all perseverance is necessary. It will not do to discontinue practice if a little effort does not produce the desired effect. It is said that a man practised so intensely that an ant-hill grew upon him."

C: "Maharaj, what does *japa* actually mean?"

Swami: "It means that one should utter His name and at the same time meditate on His form, think of Him

and love Him. If the mind is attached to worldly things, what will the mere repetition of God's name do? What is essentially wanted is that we must anyhow make Him our own."

*Disciple* : "Just as Sri Ramakrishna has said : 'You should somehow meet the master of the house, either by fighting with the gate-keeper or by climbing the wall.'"

*C* : "What about those who think : 'I have seen the Master (Sri Ramakrishna) or the Holy Mother, I need not undergo any spiritual practice?'"

*Swami* : "How can I say anything about them? They best know their affairs."

*Disciple* : "Perhaps *C*. means that there are some who believe that since the Holy Mother has taken their entire responsibility, they need not make any effort themselves. They say that since she is holding them by the hand, they can do whatever they like with the other hand,—their salvation is assured."

*Swami* : "He who truly has this faith, has already reached the goal. But is it easy to have that faith? One must beware of self-delusion. Those who have absolute trust in God will be at once purified through His grace, though they might have committed heinous sins before. Just apply a little spark of fire to a mountain-high heap of cotton. The whole mass will be quickly consumed. If you bring light into a room which has been dark for a thousand years, will the darkness go gradually or all at once? The Lord says in the *Gītā* : 'Even if a very wicked man worships Me, with devotion to none else, he should be regarded as good, for he has rightly resolved. Soon he becomes righteous, and attains to eternal peace. O son of Kunti, boldly canst thou proclaim that my devotee is never destroyed.' Even if the greatest villain resigns himself entirely to Him, he must be considered a devotee. And 'soon he becomes righteous.' Through His grace he no longer remains a villain but becomes a pious man. An expert dancer never

makes a wrong step. No sin can possibly be committed by him who surrenders himself to God, although he might have committed many misdeeds before. There was no sin which Girish Babu did not indulge in. He once said to us : 'I have drunk so much wine in my life that if the wine-bottles were placed one upon another, they would stand as high as Mount Everest.' He was a poet, so he spoke thus poetically. Really he drank much. When he was asked by the Master to repeat the name of God morning and evening he refused. He said : 'I am not sure I can. I do not know in what condition or where I may be at those hours.' Then Sri Ramakrishna asked him to remember God before meal-time. 'That also I cannot promise you,' replied Girish Babu, 'I am often engrossed in law-suits and have to think all sorts of things. I cannot do even that.' At that Sri Ramakrishna said : 'Then give me the "power of attorney."' Referring to this, Girish Babu afterwards said to us : 'I readily agreed to give him the power of attorney, but later on I have realised what a difficult task it is to give the power of attorney. I had said that I would not be able to repeat the name of God even once in the evening, but afterwards I found that I could not do the least bit of work without remembering Him every moment.' In one day Girish Babu gave up his fifteen years' habit of taking opium. He said that the first three days he had to suffer much, his whole body became inert. On the fourth day he was all right. Later in life he did not even smoke."

*C* : "How to know whether one is progressing towards Him or not?"

*Swami* : "He can know it himself. Others also can know it. All his passions, lust, anger, greed will wane, his attachment for the objects of senses will diminish and he will have peace at heart."

*Disciple* : "Maharaj, can a man have peace before the realisation of God?"



*Swami*: "No, real peace is far off. But if you find that a man's desire for sense-enjoyments is growing less and less and his love is extending over all beings, then you may know that he is progressing towards God. Simply repeating the holy name will not do. If there be a hole of attachment in the mind, the result of *japa* will run out through it. A man irrigated his field all day, but in the evening he found that all the water had run out through a hole, not a drop had remained in the field.

"I remember a beautiful saying of Nag Mahasaya in this connection. I had gone to his house. His father was practising *japa* sitting in a corner. Nag Mahasaya said to me: 'Bless my father that he may have true devotion to God.' 'He has already got it,' I replied, 'he is constantly repeating the

name of God. What more do you want?' Nag Mahasaya rejoined: 'What is the use of rowing a boat which is at anchor? My father is much attached to me. What will his *japa* do?' 'If he should not love a son like you, whom else should he love?' said I. 'Don't say so, don't say so,' he cried out, 'only bless that he may lose all attachment for me.'

"Oh, what a great man Nag Mahasaya was! Do you know the full meaning of 'rowing a boat at anchor?' One dark night several drunkards took it into their heads to have a boat-trip. They went to the river, got into a boat and at once began to row. When it was dawn they found that they were at the same *ghât* from which they thought they had started. They had been so intoxicated that they had forgotten to weigh the anchor!"

## AMERICA AT THE TIME OF VIVEKANANDA'S FIRST VISIT\*

*The Anglo-Saxon Forerunners of the Spirit  
of Asia : Emerson, Thoreau, Walt Whitman*

BY ROMAIN ROLLAND

It would be a matter of deep interest to know exactly how far the American spirit had been impregnated, directly or indirectly, by the infiltration of Hindu thought during the nineteenth century: for there can be no doubt that it has contributed to the strange moral and religious mentality of the modern United States which Europe has so much difficulty in understanding,—with its astonishing mixture of Anglo-Saxon Puritanism, Yankee optimism of action, pragmatism, "scientism," and pseudo-Vedântism. I do not know whether any historian will be found to occupy himself seriously with the question. It is nevertheless a psychological problem of

the first order, intimately connected with the history of our civilisation. I do not possess the means for its solution, but at least I can indicate certain elements in it.

It would seem that one of the chief people to introduce Hindu thought into the United States was Emerson, and that Emerson in so doing had been deeply influenced by Thoreau.

He was predisposed to such influences; for 1880 onwards they began to appear in his *Journal*, wherein he noted references to Hindu religious texts. His famous lecture, which created a scandal at the time, given in 1888 at the University of Harvard, expressed belief in the Divine in man akin to the concept of the soul, Atman-Brahman. It is here that he attached a strictly moral or moralist interpretation to it,

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his own mark and that of his race. But its fulfilment was the ecstatic realisation of a veritable Yoga of "justice", conceived in the double sense of moral good and cosmic equilibrium and uniting at one and the same time Karma (action), Bhakti (love) and Jnâna (wisdom).

Emerson exercised little method either in his reading or writing; and Cabot, in his Memoir of him, tells us that he was easily satisfied with extracts and quotations and did not consult the authorities as a whole. But Thoreau was a great reader; and between 1837 and 1862 he was Emerson's neighbour. In July, 1846, Emerson notes that Thoreau had been reading to him extracts from his *Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*. Now this work (section, Monday) is an enthusiastic eulogy of the *Gita*, and of the great poems and philosophies of India. Thoreau suggested "A joint Bible" of the Asiatic Scriptures, "Chinese, Hindus, Persians, Hebrews, to carry to the ends of the earth." And he took for his motto, *Ex Oriente Lux*.

It may be imagined that such suggestions were not thrown away upon Emerson, and that the ardent *Asiatism* of Thoreau extended to him.

It was at the same time that the *Transcendental Club*, he had founded, was in full swing; and after 1850, the *Dial*, its quarterly, which he edited with the American Hypatia, Margaret Fuller, published translations from the Oriental languages. The emotion produced in him by Indian thought must have been very strong for him to write in 1856 such a deeply Vedântic poem as his beautiful *Brahma*.

It must be taken into consideration that New England was passing through a crisis of spiritual renaissance and intoxicating idealism, corresponding (though composed of very different elements, less cultivated, more robust, and infinitely nearer to nature) to the idealistic flame of Europe before 1848. The anarchic Brookfarm of George Ripley (between 1840 and 1847), the fever-

ish assembly of the *Friends of Universal Progress* at Boston in 1840, brought together in one group men and women of all opinions and professions, all fired with primitive energy, and aspiring to shake off the shackles of past lies without knowing what truth to adopt; for no human society can live unless it has persuaded itself that it possesses the Truth!

Alas! the Truth espoused by America during the subsequent half century bears no resemblance to the generous expectation of the honeymoon! Truth was not ripe, still less those who wished to pluck it. Its failure was, however, by no means due to lack of noble ideals and great ideas, but they were all too mixed and too hastily digested without time for them to be healthily assimilated. The nervous shocks, produced by the grave political and social upheavals after the war of Secession, the morbid haste which has developed into the frantic rhythm of modern civilisation, have thrown the American spirit off its balance for a long time. It is, however, not difficult to trace during the second half of the century the seeds sown by the free pioneers of Concord, Emerson and Thoreau. But from their grain what strange bread has been kneaded by the followers of the "mind-cure" and of Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy!

Both of them have used, more or less wittingly, Indian elements strained through the idealism of Emerson. But they have reduced them to the dead level of a utilitarianism that looks only to the immediate profit, of a kind of mystic hygiene, resting on a prodigious credulity which gives to Christian Science its proud pseudo-scientific aspect and its pseudo-Christianity.

One trait common to these doctrines is the vulgar optimism, which resolves the problem of evil by a simple denial, or rather by its omission. "Evil does not exist. Then, let us turn away our eyes!"

Such an intellectual attitude in all its naive simplicity was too often that of Emerson. He omitted as often as possible from his subjects those

of illness or death. He hated the shades. "Respect the light!" But it was the respect of fear. His eyes were feeble and so he began by putting the sun under a shade. In this he was only too closely followed by his fellow-countrymen. Perhaps it is not too much to say that such optimism was necessary for action, but I have no great faith in the energy of a man or of a people, which rests on conditions contrary to the *Natura Rerum*. I prefer Margaret Fuller's saying: "I accept the universe." But whether one accepts it or not, the first essential is to see it and to see it as a whole! We shall soon hear Vivekananda saying to his English disciple: "Learn to recognise the Mother, in Evil, Terror, Sorrow, Denial as well as in Sweetness, and in Joy." Similarly the smiling Ramakrishna from the depths of his dream of love and bliss, could see and remind the complaisant preachers of a "good God" that Goodness was not enough to define the Force which daily sacrificed thousands of innocents. Therein lies the capital difference separating India and heroic Greece from Anglo-Saxon optimism. They look Reality in the face, whether they embrace it as in India or struggle against it and try to subdue it as in Greece; but with them action never impinges on the domain of knowledge as in America, where knowledge has been domesticated in the service of action and wears a livery with gold-braided cap bearing the name: Pragmatism.

It is easily understood that Vivekananda would not like such trappings concealing as they did puny and degraded bastards of his glorious, free and sovereign Vedāntism of India.

But overtopping this herd of living men there was a dead giant, whose shade was a thousand times warmer than such pale reflections of the Sun of Being seen through their cold methodist window-panes. He stood before Vivekananda and held out his great hand to him. . . . How was it that he did not take it? . . . Or rather (for we know

that later in India Vivekananda read his *Leaves of Grass*) how is it that Vivekananda's chroniclers, however careless and ill-informed, have managed to leave this capital event out of their story: the meeting of the Indian Ambassador of the Atman-Brahman with the epic singer of *Myself*—Walt Whitman?\*

He had just died on March 26, 1892, the previous year, near Camden, the workman's suburb of Philadelphia. The triumphant memory of his obsequies—not pagan as they have been described, but exactly in the spirit of Indian universalism, were still reverberating. Vivekananda saw more than one of Whitman's intimates coming to him; he was even joined in friendship to him who had bidden the last farewell to the poet, the famous agnostic and materialist author, Robert Ingersoll. He more than once argued with him in friendly fashion, so it is impossible that he should not have heard of Whitman.

However famous this great man may be through the many works that have been devoted to him in all lands, it is necessary for me to give here a short account of his religious thought; for that is the side of his work that has come least into the limelight—and at the same time it is the kernel.

There is nothing hidden in the meaning of his thought. The good Whitman does not veil his nakedness. His faith appears best of all in *Leaves of Grass*, and is especially concentrated in one great poem which has been thrown too much into the shade by his *Song of Myself*, but which must be replaced in the front rank where Whitman himself placed it, at the head of his own definite edition, immediately following

\* Evidently Walt Whitman did not appear as important to them as he appears to M. Rolland in relation to the American mission of Swami Vivekananda. M. Rolland himself admits that the influence of Whitman's thought on his countrymen was little. Besides, we Hindus are inclined to make distinction between mere intellectual and poetic effusions and actual realisation. The former count little in the life of humanity, the latter much.—Ed.

the *Inscriptions*, namely his *Starting from Paumanok*.

What does he say there?

"I inaugurate a religion. . . .

. . . I say the whole earth and all the stars in the sky are for religion's sake. . . ."

"Know you, solely to drop in the earth the germs of a greater religion. . .

I sing. . . .

For you to share with me two great-nesses, and a third one rising inclusive and more resplendent. The greatness of Love and of Democracy, and the great-ness of religion. . . ."

(Why then have the first two "great-nesses", which are of an inferior order, generally eclipsed the first, which embraces and dominates them, in the minds of Whitman's commentators?)

What was this religion which so filled his heart that he meditated spreading it abroad throughout all lands by means of lectures, in spite of the little taste he had for speaking in public? It is summed up and contained in one word, which rings in the ears wonderfully like Indian music: the word *Identity*. It fills the whole work. It is to be found in almost all his poems.

Identity with all forms of life at every instant; the immediateness of realised Unity; and the certainty of Eternity for every second, for every atom of Existence.

How had Whitman come by this faith?

Certainly by enlightenment, by some blow he had experienced, by illumination, probably arising from some spiritual crisis a short time after he had reached his thirtieth year and experienced the emotions aroused by his journey to New Orleans, of which little is known.

It is improbable that it was any reading of Indian thought that touched him. When Thoreau, in November 1856, came to tell him that his *Leaves of Grass* (first appeared in July 1855, then a second edition in the summer of 1856) recalled to his mind the great

Oriental poems and to ask if he knew them, Whitman replied with a categorical "No!" and there is no reason to doubt his word. He read little, certainly very few books; he did not like libraries and men brought up upon them. To the very end of his life he does not seem to have had any curiosity to verify the similarity between his thought and that of Asia obvious to the little circle of Concord. The extreme vagueness of the expressions used every time that he introduced a glimpse of India into his Homeric enumerations is the best guarantee of his ignorance.

It is then all the more interesting to discover how he could without going beyond himself—a 100% American self—all unwittingly link up with Vedântic thought. (For its kinship did not escape any of the Emerson group, beginning with Emerson himself, whose genial quip is not sufficiently famous: "*Leaves of Grass* seem to be a mixture of the *Bhagavad Gita* and *The New York Herald*.")

The starting point with Whitman was in the profundities of his own race, in his own religious line—paradoxical though it may seem. His paternal family belonged to the Quaker Left, grouped round a free believer, Elias Hicks, to whom at the end of his life Whitman dedicated a pamphlet. He was a great religious individualist, free from all church and all *credo*, who made religion consist entirely of inner illumination, "the secret silent ecstasy."

Such a moral disposition in Whitman was bound to bring about from his childhood a habit of mystic concentration, having no precise object but filtering nevertheless through all the emotions of life. The young man's peculiar genius did the rest. His nature possessed a kind of voracious receptivity, which made him not only, like ordinary men, glean from the vine-arbour of the spectacle of the universe, some grains of pleasure or pain, but instantaneously incorporate himself with each object that he saw. He has described this rare

disposition in the admirable poem :  
*Autumn Rivulets* :

"There was a child went forth. . . .  
And the first object he look'd upon,  
that object he became,  
And that object became part of  
him for the day or a certain  
part of the day,  
Or for many years or stretching  
cycles of years. . . ."

Instinctively rather than reflectively he had reached the conclusion that the whole universe was for him not object but subject—it was he. When he wrote an account all at once in his thirties of what appeared to him his real birth, (probably about 1851—1852) it was a blinding flash, an ecstatic blow :

"Oh! the Joy," he said, "of my soul leaning pois'd on itself, receiving identity through materials. . . . My soul vibrated back to me from them . . . ."

It seemed to him that he was "awake for the first time and that all that had gone before was nothing but a despicable sleep."

Finally he heard some lectures or conferences of Emerson's and they may have intellectualised his intuition so that it came to fruition in ideas, however imperfectly determined and connected; for with this man, always indifferent to the logic of reasoning and to metaphysical construction, his whole chain of thought brought him inevitably to the present moment and to a degree of illumination that made an infinity of space and time arise from them. Hence he immediately perceived, embraced, espoused, and became at one and the same time each distinct object and their mighty totality, the unrolling and the fusion of the whole Cosmos realised in each morsel of the atom, and of life. And how does this differ from the point of ecstasy, the most intoxicated Samādhi of a Bhakti-Yogin who, reaching in a trice the summit of realisation, and having mastered it, comes down again to use it in all the acts and thoughts of his everyday life?

Here then is a typical example of the predisposition to Vedāntism which existed in America well before the arrival of Vivekananda. Indeed it is a universal disposition of the human soul in all countries and in all ages, and not contained, as Indian Vedāntists are inclined to believe, in a body of doctrines belonging to one country alone. On the contrary it is either helped or hindered by the chances of evolution among the different peoples and the creeds and customs whereon their own civilisations are built. It may be said that this attitude of mind is latent in all who carry within themselves a spark of the creative fire, and particularly is it true of great artists, in whom the universe is not only reflected (as in the cold glance of the medium), but incarnate. I have already mentioned in the case of Beethoven crises of Dionysiac union with the Mother, to use one of many names for the hidden Being whom the heart perceives in each earth-beat. Moreover, great European poetry of the nineteenth century, especially that of the English poets of the age of Wordsworth and Shelley, is full of such sudden gleams. But no Western poet possessed them so strongly or so consciously as Whitman, who collected all the scattered fires into a brazier, transmuting his intuition into a faith—faith in his people, faith in the world, faith in humanity as a whole.

How strange it is that this faith was not brought face to face with Vivekananda's! Would he not have been struck by so many unexpected similarities: the sentiment, so strong in Whitman, so insistent, so persistent, of the journey of his ego "through trillions" of years and incessant "incarnations," keeping the record in double column of profit and loss of each of his previous existences,—the dual self wherein no one god must debase himself before the others, the net of Mâyâ which he tears asunder so that through the widened meshes the illuminating face of God may shine, "thou orb of many orbs—thou seething principle,

thou well kept latent germ, thou centre,"—the glorious "Song of the Universal" wherein fusion is realised by the harmony of antinomies, embracing all religions, all beliefs and unbeliefs and even the doubts of all the souls of the universe, which in India was the very mission delegated by Ramakrishna to his disciples,—his own message that "All is Truth!"

And is it not true that they were even alike in some individual characteristics such as the high pride which compared itself to God; the warrior spirit of the great Kshatriya "the enemy of repose," and that of the brother of war, fearing neither danger nor death, but calling them rather; the worship rendered to the Terrible, an interpretation recalling the dark yet magnificent confidences of Vivekananda to Sister Nivedita during their dream-like pilgrimage in the Himalayas?

At the same time I can see clearly what Vivekananda would have disliked in Whitman: the ridiculous mixture of *The New York Herald* and the *Bhagavad Gita*, which awoke the fine smile of Emerson—his metaphysical journalism, his small shopkeeper's wisdom, picked up from dictionaries—his eccentric affectation of a bearded Narcissus, his colossal complacency with regard to himself and his people—his democratic Americanism with its childish vanity and expansive vulgarity ever seeking the lime-light; all these must have roused the aristocratic disdain of the great Indian. Especially would Vivekananda have had no patience with the compromising coquettings of his idealism with the forbidden joys of "metaphysics," spiritualism and intercourse with spirits, etc. . . .

But these differences would not have prevented the drawing of this mighty lover to the metal of the soul of a Vivekananda. And, in point of fact, they did not prevent it later on, for we have the proof that Vivekananda read in India *Leaves of Grass*, and that he called Whitman "the Sannyasin of America," and thus declared their com-

mon parentage. Is it then to be believed that he did not make his discovery until the end of his stay in America, since, during the stay, there is no mention of the relation published by his disciples in detail?

Whatever the truth may be, the spirit of Whitman was there, attesting that America was ready to listen to Indian thought. She went ahead. And the old prophet of Camden had solemnly announced the arrival of India:

"Towards us, O my city,  
The Generator comes,  
The nest of languages, which has  
given us poems, the race of  
former times. . . .  
The race of Brahma is coming."

He had opened his arms to her. He had confided to America, "the nave of democracy," the Pilgrim of India.

"The past reposes in thee. . . .  
You bring great companions with  
you.  
Venerable priestly Asia sails with  
you in this day."

The Indian biographers of Vivekananda have then made a regrettable omission in not naming Whitman in the front rank of those whose thought did the honours of the New Continent to the stranger guest.

But having put him in his proper place—next to Vivekananda, shoulder to shoulder—we must be careful not to exaggerate his influence over America. This Homer of the "masses" did not succeed in prevailing upon the masses. This annunciator of the great destinies of Democracy in America died misunderstood, almost unperceived by the democrats of the New World. This singer of the "Divine mean" was only loved and revered by a small group of selected artists and exceptional men—and perhaps more in England than in the United States.

But all the same he is one of the true Forerunners. And it is no less certain that they are the true representatives of their people—even if their people are

unaware of it: in them is liberated before their time the profound energies which are concealed within the human masses and which they repel: they announce them; sooner or later they

will come to light. A Whitman was the index of genius of the hidden soul that was sleeping—(she is not yet quite awake)—in the ocean depths of his people of the United States.

## PHASES OF IMMEDIATE EXPERIENCE

BY DR. MAHENDRANATH SIRCAR, M.A., PH.D.

### INTRODUCTION

The Upanisads appeal at once to imagination and the philosophic instinct by the problem they set forth and the promise they offer. Mankind is restive over its little existence and is anxious to get a light that can break through the phenomenal real and can put at rest all questioning that wells up in its breast. Truth is the summit of existence. Truth is the proper object of search. And so long as the heart is not upon the enduring, the heart cannot have rest, the soul, its anxiety over. The search for the enduring becomes a sole motive in life when life's move in other directions stands baffled at the little they can yield unto it. The quest for the Eternal in most persons cannot seriously begin before the conventions set up in the priestcraft and in popular theological course have had their trials. The sacrificial rites with the promises of subtle sense-delights in the subtler planes of existence cannot satisfy the seeker, for he is still burdened with the anxieties of divided existence; and however the privileges increase in volume and quantity, life labours in the mire of ignorance. But the failure of the sacrificial rites to give full satisfaction has its effect and use. It establishes the futility of a life in nature accumulating and enjoying nature's possibilities and privileges.

The sacrificial mysticism cannot give lasting satisfaction, for the gaze is still towards the external and the transient. And the merit which the seeker acquires cannot last long. It is an acquired momentum which is exhausted with its fruition.

Progress, however high, is attendant with a fall, and naturally the earnest seeker has to revise his method of search and manner of approach. The dawn of philosophic instinct is possible when the other courses and methods of approach are found inefficient. Philosophic reflection becomes possible when the smooth and almost blind adaptation, due to the incessant activities of nature's forces in us, has a check, and the forces act inwardly in generating thought and reflection without exhausting themselves upon the ill-conceived and mistaken attempts at a satisfaction in an outward gaze on life. Man is an instinctive being by birth. He is a thinking being by experience. He is an illuminated being by intuition. The first impulses are natural, these impulses have hasty expirations and gratifications, based as they are upon the unilluminated instincts of survival. The instinct of survival breeds a semi-mystical attitude towards the forces of nature. The confined vision of man's utter dependence upon nature, his instinct of self-preservation and the gratification of instincts soon evolve in him a mystic understanding of nature as the sole source of power. The primitive insight does not go beyond that and the sacrifices are the symbols of what the primitive mind feels towards nature's forces. These forces are soon deified, and this deification reads Devas in the beneficent powers of nature and Asuras in the malevolent forces of nature. With the dawn of philosophic vision the Vedic pantheon is reduced to a unity of God-head and a cosmistic vision of life displaces the least sense of difference

between the presiding forces of nature and the immanent Divine life.

The animated vision of nature's forces gives a fine penetration and understanding of nature, and exalts it into the conception of a living and vibrative existence endowed with an oversoul, to which all the forces are subordinate and of which they are inadequate and partial expressions. The vision of such an animated being of nature is immediate. It is a form of mystic exaltation. This form of exaltation takes delight in the wonders that nature has revealed before man.

The first dawn of mystic life begins with the sublimation of nature, where the forces are felt as if living and powerful with the capacity of not only offering us privileges but of shedding upon us genial light to lead us aright. In this way the mystic sense begins to feel the Divine light through the orb of the dawn, through the silvery rays of the moon, through the shining rays of the stars, and Divine life through the winds and thunders. The mystic soul is bold enough to stand the kindly and the fierce expressions of the forces of nature, and keen enough to catch the animation which throbs in them. The seeker stands radiant with the mystic sense that nature, however fierce and violent, carries to the soul the message of a new life, though occasionally it may overpower us with the sense of our littleness and utter helplessness before it. Religious consciousness is stirred by the majesty of nature. The majesty excites wonder and admiration. Both of them continue to foster a religious feeling and a reverent attitude towards nature. But this attitude can grow when the intellect has overcome the primitive tendencies of regarding Gods as the carriers of privileges and the the recipients of oblations. This primitive religious feeling of surrender comes out of the feeling of self-preservation. This instinct of self-preservation is a biological instinct, and religious consciousness originally has a reference to

this instinct. The-will-to-live sticks to the soul and the Gods and the shining deities are worshipped to satisfy this original instinct.

But soon this attitude is transcended, and the seeker begins to feel more than what meets the senses in nature's forces. This mystic attitude gives the sublimated perception of nature animated and installed in the philosophic conception of a supersensuous reality, and the conception of an all-pervasive spirit soon begins to displace the individuated conceptions of earth-spirits, sky-spirits, etc. This is a distinct advance in the philosophic and religious consciousness and indicates the beginning of true wisdom; for the religious consciousness keeps the soul at rest, not so much by hope of reward here or hereafter as by silencing all expectations by the inward light of the soul. Before the inward light can attain its fulness, the outward vision has a finer reading of an identity between spirit and nature. But this identity cannot be complete unless man has a direct vision of spirit in his inward being. The tendency of installing nature's God in place of nature is a definite tendency, and so far as religious consciousness is concerned, it makes a definite advance in spirituality. The pan-psyche idea of nature is a favourite theme in some texts, but it leaves an effect on feeling which is the realization of a life and consciousness as yet not developed into a clear and definite knowledge. So vast is the experience that almost overpowers the seeker, that definite consciousness becomes an impossibility. We have, therefore, an indefinable feeling which has an inadequate expression.

The necessity of feeling this existence in the inward soul is still there, and led by this necessity the external gaze and outward appeal are displaced by inner search and inward vision. However lofty the inspiration and subtle the vision may be, the mental effort to grasp the meaning and realize the import of the influence received from without, still speaks of an external reference of



knowledge and feeling. The mental effort is still objective.

This objectivity makes the apprehension of the spirit-self still mediate and external, and the quickening touch can at best make the experience deep and expression definite and clear, but cannot change mediacy into immediacy. The apparent immediacy is still an immediacy of the senses outer or inner; it is the immediacy of feeling but not of transcendence.

Though this form of heightened feeling has an elasticity not met in the neophytes at the start, still not infrequently it is regarded as the acme of spiritual consciousness inasmuch as the new experience has the vivifying and vitalizing force, and nature seems to be vibrating with new light and life. Such a vision has been a fruitful source of a panpsychic conception which appeals by the immanence of spirit in nature and man. Such a vision proves fruitful in conceiving a co-conscious super-existence embracing the conscious centres in men and the living centres in nature.

But this vision is still regarded as insufficient. It does not satisfy fully the intellectual and spiritual needs. The animistic vision is a delight in exalted feeling. But it is not wisdom though it touches the fringe of transcendental consciousness. The culture of feeling has an importance in waking up esoteric wisdom, but exalted feelings are to be distinguished from transcendental wisdom.

The exalted feeling and animated being are values in determinate consciousness. These values are originally ideal but become actually real in heightened religious being. These feelings are supremely delightful and usher in an ideal existence—the archetypal consciousness which permeates the actualities and facts of life. Such consciousness of ideal forms is to be distinguished from the basic being. The ideal-form-consciousness is a penetration into the causal aspect of existence, the aspect which lies immanent in the world order.

It is necessary to distinguish the actual and the ideal aspects of existence in the determinate from the transcendent in the indeterminate. The exalted feeling aroused by a fellowship with society and nature is a form of consciousness which has its enjoyment of the ideal in the actual but is not strictly transcendental. It is an elevated feeling, a superior consciousness in which serene delight finds its adequate expression, but which cannot pass for the knowledge of the basic reality.

Such an animated vision of nature has a touch upon mystic consciousness,—it differs from logical consciousness. It can fitly be called nature mysticism and is akin to poetic intuition of beauty and sweetness. The adept feels the living nature as the mirror of the reality. Nature does not replace spirit, nature becomes infused with spirit.

Nature is raised from its inertness to a medium of expression, and the concrete is felt and enjoyed, and the mind cannot rise above the delight of the rhythm and harmony and embrace the transcendent.

Consciousness cannot approach that height so long as the feeling attitude has not been displaced by a deeper penetration.

This penetration is what really makes the teaching of the Upanisads different from the Vedas (the Samhitās and the Brāhmanas). The vision and the appraisal of the living nature have no doubt reduced the Vedic pantheon to the conception of an all-permeating being; still mind needs greater penetration to touch the basic being.

In the Upanisads the search has been into the basic reality. In this sense the mysticism which they represent is transcendental. The search is no longer external, it becomes inward.

The Upanisads in this sense are more appealing to the philosophic instinct, for the search for reality must begin necessarily in the inward soul. But philosophy cannot convince if the reality is not felt and apprehended immediately. The immediate conscious-

ness is the highest revealer of truth when this immediacy is not of the senses, nor of the mind, but of intuition. The Upanisadic approach is, therefore, to be distinguished from the Vedic approach of apprehending Truth.\* The one is inward, the other is outward. The one searches the truth through the intuition of the soul, the other through the revelation through nature.

#### FORMS OF INTUITION

The sublimated consciousness of nature has to be distinguished from the philosophic or transcendent intuition. The word "intuition" is often loosely used and has a wide application. It has the common connotation of immediacy of apprehension. The forms of immediacy are to be distinguished, and because they are not clearly distinguished they become the veritable source of error and confusion. The exact appreciation of a phase of truth is always relative to the faculty which receives it, and unless a clear discrimination is exercised, the seeker makes a confusion between exaltation of feeling and appreciation of truth.

Intuition is the faculty of immediate apprehension. It may be empiric and transcendental. An empiric intuition is the immediate consciousness of reception through the affections of the senses and the mental being. It includes the intuitions of the sensibility, the instinctive intuitions. It embraces even the intuitions of supersensuous consciousness. These intuitions differ amongst themselves, but there is no difference in kind, for they are phenomenal expressions. The affections of sensibility might have an outward touch of reference, the instinctive intuitions might help unerringly in biological adaptation. The supersensuous intuitions are really not

non-sensuous, they differ from the sensuous only in affecting the finer impulses and the delicate fibres of our being. But still they are forms of affections and cannot be strictly different from empiric intuitions. In this sense the psychic (yogic) penetration and the modern spiritistic revelations are, however subtle and fine, still empiric so long as they touch the fringe of reality. It may sound strange, but it is so, since such perceptions are still a finer sensibility and must differ from the apprehension through transcendental or philosophic intuition. They affect the fine senses and being but cannot touch the underlying essence or reality. It has been said truly : "Metaphysical truths can be conceived only by a faculty which because its operation is on the immediate, we may call intuitive, if it be thoroughly understood that it has absolutely nothing in common with what certain contemporary philosophers call intuition, a merely sensitive and vital faculty properly inferior to discursive intelligence and not superior to it" (a quotation from Rene Gue'non in George Santayana's *Realm of Essence*). Even religious consciousness, when it confines itself to a fine feeling, is still empiric; though such feelings or experiences are far removed from the ordinary sense-consciousness. Of course religious consciousness as grasping reality should be distinguished from religious consciousness as a fine feeling and an urge. The human consciousness is elastic enough to embrace infinite shades and phases. The seeker makes a confusion of the glorious feelings on the path with reality. The absence of a discriminating sense has been the fruitful source of false religions that creep up on the finer phases of our empiric intuition. The Upanisadic seers are anxious to raise the caution not to make the mistake of identifying an exalted feeling with the appreciation of reality. When the inner consciousness has a sudden elasticity and swift flow of fine ideas and finer feelings, it naturally clings to them and has the possibility of mistaking

\* This is a general statement. There are passages in the Rik Veda, which indicate that the truth of the Upanisads are implicit in the Vedas. *Vide* Rik Veda, 10th Mandala, Sukta 80, Mantra 2, Sukta 81, Sukta 82, Mantras 8 and 7, Sukta 114, Mantra 5,881, Sukta 121, Mantra 1.

a shadow for reality. And this accounts for the tendency in the later history of mystic thought to install an object of adoration in place of reality. No doubt it is possible that such religious mysticism can stir the depth of consciousness, still one should not identify such feelings with transcendent intuition. Such experiences are flights into supersensuous consciousness, but cannot compare to the religious consciousness reared up in philosophic reflection and finally passing into transcendent intuition. Popular religious consciousness perchance hits upon an exalted sublime feeling and is carried on by such feelings, and an intellectual consciousness follows to give it a basis. Such emotional enthusiasm is to be distinguished from philosophic or transcendent intuition. It dominates more in the truth aspect of reality than in its delight aspect. It convinces where conviction is the demand, and in the life of search conviction is more imperative a demand than anything; for conviction in truth is the end of the search. If the transcendent intuition delights, it delights because it convinces; and the highest delight is the delight of conviction. Such delight is not shared in the heightening of feeling. Feeling delights but does not convince. Truth convinces as well as delights. Such conviction cannot come unless the intellectual intuition is touched and exercised. It penetrates the depth of being, religious feeling only touches the emotional being.

#### FORMS OF MYSTICISM

At this stage we should make clear the difference between the forms of mysticism, for mysticism is so vague a term with such a wide range of application, that a discriminating knowledge of its different shades is a necessary pre-supposition to a clear understanding of the kind of mysticism we have in the Upanisads.

Mysticism is an approach to truth rather than rational and discursive. It comes out of an anxiety to have a face to face vision of truth, and in this anxious search and deviation from

rational pursuit, it has not been infrequently identified with the different tendencies laid deep down in the soul. Though the search has been directed to the appreciation of truth and all forms of mysticism lay claim to that, still different forms can be distinguished from the manner and method of approach and also from the different conclusions and realizations they set up.

Though the conclusion in mystic search is generally supposed to be the same—the vision of truth and the life of expanse—still minor differences arise amongst the mystics. The “life of expanse” is the common promise, but a clear definition makes the vision of truth different in different forms. A tendency prevails amongst thinkers to regard mysticism as a form of intuition, which leaves aside all differences from spiritual life and delights in the identity and exclusively limits mysticism to this form of transcendent consciousness. And they base their contention on the ground that the least difference left between the finite and infinite consciousness does not give a new conclusion nor does it present a new phase of life and consciousness. It does give nothing which is not embraced in popular consciousness and as such cannot pass for mysticism.

The contention has a force; mysticism, if it really claims to vouchsafe unto humanity anything, must not only give a fine instinct and appreciation but the appreciation must pass into adoration and finally into the quiet of transcendence. But this may be the consummation devoutly to be wished for, but this cannot make us ignore the revelations of superconsciousness, which bring in newer forms of experiences. No doubt these sublimated experiences are experiences in finite expansion; still their values cannot be completely ignored as showing advances in the mystic life, though not a complete approximation to the mystic ideal. Mysticism in its widest sense is the delightful experience of a wider existence which may in its acme reach its utmost expansion and complete trans-

cence. Such forms of exalted consciousness is far removed from ordinary experiences. But there are forms of consciousness intervening between this expanse and the present limitation, and they cannot be ignored in the life of search as they are pregnant with elevated feelings and illumined consciousness and as such they are far removed from the ordinary consciousness working under the limitation of categories. They are also mystic consciousness, but if mysticism is confined to the transcendent oneness, the term pseudo-mysticism can suit them better.

But in India the term mysticism has not such a confined meaning. It is used in the wide sense to denote the immediate consciousness of truth and reality, and though differences of opinion are possible and actually exist about truth, still every form of serious philosophy and thinking which counts, claims this immediate and expansive vision of truth. And this seems to be happy in view of the fact that each form of mysticism claims a direct apprehension of truth, though the definition of truth and its presentation may vary, a variation which is sought to be fixed and established by logic.

Such a conception naturally is open to the charge that if the mystics differ amongst themselves in their definition of truth, they cannot lay claim to infallibility, and if they do so, their position becomes dogmatic. Curiously enough, none is so positive about their assertions as the mystics, none so eloquently expressive. This leads us on to a dilemma: The mystics either have or have not realized the truth; if they have, there should be no contradiction in their professions and beliefs, an actual agreement, on the other hand, is desirable; if they have not, they should not make the absolute claim to truth. The former as well as the latter make their position untenable, their mission undesirable.

Mysticism is not a definite philosophy of life. It is the heightening of life

and consciousness. It is a process of infinite expansion. It realizes new correspondences, infinite harmonies, new sympathies and affinities. It is life in its unfathomable depth and widest expansion. It differs from ordinary empiric consciousness in that it is freed from its limitations.

As such it has the widest stretch of meaning and embraces the expression of spirit in the indefinite and the definite; and any serious mysticism can hardly ignore the search of the indefinite, as the indefinite, because of its unapproachableness, is always an admiration for the intellect; and if we mistake not the reading of the inner stirring, we can hardly fail to cognise the eternal quest of the indefinite in man. The definite delights us only when it exhibits from within the shadow and reflection of the indefinite, and in the ever widening mystic consciousness the definite also appeals when it opens on new and untasted vistas. The definite has a place in the mystic consciousness only because the definite presents the indefinite in immanence before the mystic, or the definite is seen in the indefinite which adds to its life, beauty and meaning. The definite is never an attraction. And even when the indefinite is not fully presented, the definite can attract only because it presents unseen and unexperienced phases of life. The mystic is always for the charm of novelty which is the promise of an ever widening and ever quickening life, and this yearning for the novelty is increased with the presentation of the newer phases of the definite, but however deep and changing the experiences may be, the search for the indefinite remains fixed. The mystic sees more in the definite than the laity, for the indefinite is his delight and the uncommon is his search. But even here in the enjoyment of the indefinite in the definite, his soul has not its cup of delight full, for it still feels the stirring of life, the blooming of an unrealised self, and has not the quietus of the deep. Life is enjoyed and lived the most, when life and consciousness are felt beyond

its expression and stirring. The mystic has the rare privilege of seeing and enjoying life in its expression and in its quiet, and he passes from the subtler enjoyment of the expression into the deep of the quiet.

The determinate has its delight. The indeterminate has its quietus. The mystic enjoys both. The mystic consciousness in its fullest development embraces life both in its concrete manifestations and abstract transcendence. The transcendence delights him more. The definite delights only as the shadow of the transcendence, just as music delights the more as it dies away. The mystic takes delight in the definite passing off into the indefinite. He is the rare soul awakened unto the subtle beauties and delights of life; and subtler they become as they soar more and more into the indefinite.

This elevation of the determinate in the mystical consciousness and its fine expression therein have made forms and branches of mysticism possible. Mysticism is sympathetic understanding of the concrete tendencies of the soul in synthetic intuition, in love-ecstasies and in selfless service. These forms may be fitly called devotional and practical mysticism. Devotional mysticism enjoys the touch of love-consciousness, practical mysticism the delight of active service. Both claim to be mystic forms of consciousness, both have a fine being and expression. Love breathes pure under mystic inspiration. Sympathy becomes cosmic under mystic touch. Both transcend the limit of finite urge and passes into the limitless. They have in them the secret of mystic urge, the look to the beyond. They are anxious to cross the limit. Synthetic intuition and sympathetic vision enjoy the touch and embrace of the infinite life in poetic intuition and philosophic insight. All these are forms of mystic consciousness inasmuch as they are approaches to the unknown and the indefinite and that in a way that does not engage the services of the normal faculty. Mystic love and cosmic sympathy are the hidden trea-

asures of the soul, which cannot be discovered by surface-mentality. Each soars into the unseen. Each breathes in the infinite expanse. Though each has a separate faculty and a special method of approach, still each is anxious to go beyond the fringe of experience and breathe in the free, holy and rarified atmosphere of the subtle, the beyond, and the deep. In this sense, mysticism is a term that has wide application, and will cover every urge of the soul pressing beyond. The reception and this gift in mystic life require the quickening of the faculties, active, affective and receptive. The quickened activity of the normal faculties is the promise in mysticism, which touches every function of the soul and makes it highly vibrative and cosmically active. The novice even can feel this, and herein lies the greatest attraction, value and reality of life.

Mysticism touches every chord of our being, but its great promise lies in quickening the understanding and rearing up the intuitive faculty to see and feel truth, the essence of being. It is in this fruition that lies the importance of mysticism, for humanity is in search of the truth and meaning of existence, and no method can be refused in this baffling task. And what is most puzzling to unilluminated understanding is evidently clear to illuminated vision. "Science" has its use, illumination its value. When the former fails, the latter helps.

#### VISION AND INTUITION

Mystical experiences are of different kinds. They need differentiation. Some experiences are of the finer appearances, some of reality. The former are forms of psychism, the latter is knowledge.

We shall use the words "vision" and "intuition" to connote the difference. Intuition may spring from the different chords of our complex being, and they carry with them different forms of experiences, all are equally impressive, but not equally true. Their value and

truth cannot be the same. Some are true because they appear, some are true because they endure.

To avoid confusion, a distinction has to be drawn between intuitions giving the final illumination, and intuitions yielding the secrets of the finer realms of appearances. Vision proceeds from the fine and causal mental being when they are highly strung up. Inspiration, psychism, cross-correspondence, clairvoyance, clairsaudience, thought-transference, etc. are included under visions; it will be wrong to call them intuitions. They are forms of psychism, and cannot touch reality. They are indications of a fine mentality which can work in the different layers of psychic being, but they are not indications of spirituality or wisdom; not of spirituality, because they cannot produce the sense of intrinsic value, nor of wisdom, because they cannot break the sense of division, the spell of divided existence. They are the effects of a highly electrified mental being, waking up its latent powers and exercising them to its psychical profit and advantage. Nature unveils herself, and the secret powers thus attained can be misused unless the initiate is held up by high wisdom and spirituality.

Intuition proceeds from our being (spiritual being) and has no connexion with our mental being, lower or higher. It is not to be confounded with the psychic revelations, however fine and high. Even visions which proceed from the cosmic dynamism and not from the individual dynamism cannot be strictly called intuition; for they are indicative of the exercise of *Mâyâ* in its causal aspect, they cannot be called strictly intuition. Intuition is the final term, which is self-consciousness and not other-consciousness. The other-consciousness is the knowledge of not-self. It may cover the revelation of the cosmic mind, but since it is confined to the relative order, it cannot be strictly called intuition. Intuition is confined to the final knowledge of the Absolute, it is that stage of knowledge where the division of subject and object does not obtain,

and is therefore unique and immediate. The immediacy of vision is either the sense-immediacy or the psychic immediacy, it is not the immediacy of the Absolute or transcendent intuition. The immediacy of the supra-sensuous revelations is to be distinguished from the immediacy of transcendent intuition. The supra-sensuous revelations are not truth in the sense in which intuition is. Revelations have a reference to supra-mind, intuition has none. Revelations proceed from the cosmic dynamism, intuition transcends dynamism.

Hence vision, revelation and intuition are not truth in the identical sense. Vision and revelation are truth of the mental and super-mental dynamism, intuition is truth in the absolute sense. The one is empirical, the other transcendental. The empirical here connotes that which is received in sensuous, vital or mental and supra-mental planes of relative existence. These may imply supra-mental sublimities, immanental immensities; but they are not to be confounded with the absolute intuition, which is beyond all experience, however fine and sublime.

#### CONCRETE AND ABSTRACT INTUITION

Concrete intuition acquaints the soul with a synthetic vision of realities. It gives a harmony and poise of the higher mental being and is a source of serene joy, not because it gives a pleasing sensitization, but because it is a penetrating touch into the soul and a quickening force to make it realize reality on the point of expression. It feeds the being in its concrete set-up with the harmony of relations. The vision it gives is the vision of the whole, the delight it yields is the delight of harmony. It gives a unison, a sense of rhythm. It gives the synoptic vision of reality as it presents the meaning of existence.

It is to be distinguished from psychism. Psychism gives a fine dynamism, concrete intuition gives a synthetic apperception. It gives a dynamic symmetry. Psychism wakes up the fine powers, it endows us with dis-

tant visions, but it may not give the symmetry and the rhythm implied in concrete intuition. The one gives us fine power and esoteric visions, the other, the knowledge of relations and proportions. The one may accompany the other, but the one should not be confounded with the other. In the unfathomable depth of our inner being, symmetry goes along with fine possibilities.

They serve two distinct functions, and in the fine economy of life, power and organization, possibilities and order help each other. The one supplies the matter, the other form. And our being would have been a dead stone without the unity of both. Psychism penetrates into the secrets of our nature, concrete intuition adjusts them and finds their meaning in the whole. It harmonises them in the common thread of life. The one discovers new forces, new perspectives, the other gives them new synthesis and reads in them new harmonies.

Concrete intuition has the rare privilege of setting up visions and ideas in the order of a whole. Sympathetic vision is its life, synthesis its soul. It has no access into the depth of the inexpressible.

Abstract intuition excels concrete intuition; it claims access into the inexpressible. It claims to touch and penetrate the calm. When ordinary

faculties and powers are asleep, when the faculties are quiescent, the soul is awake from within; and awake it is in silence. In it it has an illumination which is not possible when the faculties are active and the soul is receptive to all influences from within and from without. When the soul has the blessed freedom from the exercise of the faculties, it has the rare privilege of knowing the unknown, of touching the intangible, of getting over the expression and activity of the ideas and of passing into complete illumination. It is illumination without expression, for expression is activity, but illumination is self-expression without activity. Expression connotes a limitation, and complete illumination is expression without the impelling urge of passing into concrete forms and moods.

Abstract intuition has the rare privilege of grasping reality without concrete expression. No faculty of the soul can vouchsafe this consummation. No science, no philosophy can have this rare claim. The abstract illumination is better to be called silence to distinguish it from expression, for the human understanding has a tendency also to pass into the concrete and it cannot understand expression as different from expressive activity. The term "illuminated silence" better expresses the nature of the transcendent illumination as different from symbolical expression.

*(To be concluded)*

## A NATIONAL LANGUAGE FOR INDIA

BY SWAMI MADHAVANANDA

One of the things that strike one forcibly on return from a trip to a foreign country like the United States of America is the diversity of tongues obtaining in this country. Over a dozen languages, each with a more or less developed literature of its own, divide among themselves the allegiance of three hundred and twenty millions of people. The persistence of this Babel of tongues is

all the more striking because the country is culturally one. Europe, too, has a great many languages, but it is a continent, and there is nothing strange in each country having its own language. But the existence of so many languages within the same country is a great hindrance to the progress of national unity. It subconsciously engenders prejudice in the minds of people speaking a certain

tongue against those who speak a different tongue. The object of this article is to suggest some remedy for minimising the evils which are due to the multiplicity of languages in India. The subject may not be new, but at this time of national awakening it is worth while to go over the ground to see whether we can find out a common language for India or not. By a common language I mean one that will serve as the medium of inter-provincial communication, a language by means of which the residents of one part of the country can exchange their views with their brothers and sisters in another part. Nothing more than this is possible now, because each of the dozen languages is old and, as already said, has a literature of its own. It is neither possible, nor is it desirable, to stamp out any language under such circumstances.

What then are we to do? We are to find out what language will best serve the purpose of the inter-provincial language we need so badly in India. Such a language must have a copious and comprehensive vocabulary capable of expressing ideas in the different fields of life, and possess withal a more or less rich literature. Here one may ask, 'Have we not already in English a language which is just doing this function?' The answer is that though English does this function in certain respects among the educated sections, yet it has some serious disadvantages which will for ever preclude any attempt to install it as the national language for India. The first drawback of English is that it is not an indigenous language of India. As such it has to be laboriously acquired. And everyone with some experience knows how many patient years of toil are needed before familiarity with the language is gained. Contrast this with some of the existing Indian languages. How much easier is it to learn them! The curse of a foreign language is that every single word of it has to be committed to memory, and as everybody knows, English idioms are a difficult study for an outsider. And as to English pronun-

ciation, it is simply hopeless. As against this let us take up an Indian language, say Hindi. The very fact that Hindi is spoken by over one hundred and twenty millions of people, that is, nearly two-fifths of the entire population, naturally brings us into contact with it in season and out of season. We are more or less familiar with its words and sounds. Moreover it has a simple grammar which, in spite of its exaggerated difficulties about one or two things to which I shall presently refer, is very easy to learn. And, what is of prime importance it is phonetic. It is also a language which is pre-eminently adaptive, and has a wonderful capacity—in common with most of the Indian vernaculars—for expressing religious and philosophical ideas, the thing which is India's special province. It has also a very rich poetical literature and a fast developing prose literature too. All these things should at once give Hindi a predominance over English, no matter how rich the latter is in literature. The treasures of English literature will be beyond the reach of the rank and file of the Indian people unless they can have a sufficient command over the language, which it will take them years to do. The dream of certain enthusiasts that Indian children will readily pick up English if they hear it spoken in their nursery, will never materialise in India, for the simple reason that there will never be available a sufficient number of English people to form the required background to the Indian home-life. On the contrary, there are a hundred times more chances for an Indian language, Hindi for instance, to be so widespread in the land as to be imbibed with the mother's milk by every Indian child. The odds against English are overwhelming.

There are indeed people who are so convinced of the importance of English as a world language that they cannot think how any other language can be the national language of India. I refer them to countries like Japan, or France, or Germany. They do not use English as the common speech, but are just as fully



alive to what is going on in the world, by having the latest books on science or philosophy or literature translated into their own tongue. It is thus only that the millions can get into touch with the best thoughts of other countries in a short time. Of course France or Germany has English-speaking groups. India too will have them. They will be our specialists in that line. English will remain as one of the second languages in the country to be learnt at option. That is all. But that does not prevent Hindi or any other equally suitable Indian language being the national language of India. From whatever angle we look at the question, English cannot stand in comparison with any of these Indian languages as regards the ease with which it can be acquired and spoken *en masse*.

Now let me explain why I claim for Hindi advantages over any other Indian language. Why should we not choose Bengali, which is as easy to learn as Hindi, and much richer in literature, or Marathi, which comes next in order? Why not take up Tamil, that great language of Southern India, which is so ancient and so very rich in literature? The answer is, we must choose that language which is easy to learn, easy to pronounce, is widely spoken, is capable of great adaptability, and is rich in literature. If we consider all these five points, we shall see that Hindi's claims are the highest. As regards the first and last points, Bengali scores over Hindi. It is learnt more quickly because of its simpler grammar, and it has a very rich literature. Regarding this last point it yields place, if at all, only to Tamil. But Bengali pronunciation is difficult compared with Hindi, which is phonetic. Students of Northern India who have learnt Bengali through the eye, find great difficulties in speaking it correctly. They read and understand, but they cannot speak Bengali. The colloquial forms of expression are different from the literary forms, which makes it so hard for non-Bengalees to

speak correct Bengali. In fact, they are so conscious of their defects in this matter that they do not often dare to speak it for fear of exciting ridicule. So Bengali cannot be the language we are seeking for. I have conceded that Bengali has a richer literature than Hindi, but let it be remembered that the poetical literature of Hindi is vast and exceedingly rich, although slightly more difficult. Marathi and Gujarati are even more difficult than Hindi, because of their three genders, more or less arbitrary, instead of two, as in Hindi. Tamil is very much more difficult, specially as regards pronunciation, which every outsider can testify to. As regards the second point, Hindi, in common with Marathi and Gujarati, has advantages over Bengali or any Southern language. While as regards the third point, extensivity, it easily has the first place in India, with Bengali following at a distance. With reference to the fourth point, *viz.*, adaptability, Hindi yields to no other Indian language. So taking all things together Hindi fulfils most of the conditions that a national language in India should satisfy.

There is another point to consider. All the great North Indian languages are derived from Sanskrit. This is the reason why anyone of them can be easily acquired by those who speak the cognate languages. All of them open the door to the vast cultural wealth which Sanskrit, 'the language of the gods,' possesses more than any other language of the world. And it is impossible to overemphasise this point, for we, Indians, must always draw our inspiration from this inexhaustible mine of ancient treasures. Three of the four Southern languages, *viz.*, Telugu, Canarese and Malayalam, too, have a large percentage of Sanskrit words in them. And for this reason no Southerner, except the Tamilian, will find it difficult to learn Hindi. On the other hand, a Northerner who wishes to learn Tamil or any other Southern language, knows how much more laborious it is

for him than it is for his Southern brothers to learn his own. I make bold to say that one born and brought up in Southern India, even a Tamilian, and possessing an average culture will be able to pick up Hindi in six months or even earlier. This should effectively silence those who oppose the idea of Hindi being chosen as the national language of India. Does not English exact fifty times more labour? One may question this statement by pointing to the perplexities of Hindi gender. But on closer scrutiny the subject will not appear so formidable as one thinks. There is method in its madness. French in spite of the same handicap is the continental language of Europe. Yet Hindi verbs, notwithstanding their complication with gender, are much easier than French verbs. The position of French as a continental language is a settled fact, and nobody demurs to it, while objections are raised against Hindi on the ground of difficulty, simply because it is a new-comer in the field. With a little familiarity the outstanding advantages of Hindi will be patent to one and all. Its association with the *Devanagari* script is another point in its favour, which links it up with Sanskrit. Moreover, Urdu, the language of Indian Mahomedans, is but a variant of Hindi. Therefore, since Hindi has so many outstanding advantages and can be learnt so easily, it is not wise to raise objections against its use as the national language of India, specially when national interests are at stake. Let me repeat that not one of the existing vernaculars of India will be cast aside. They will con-

tinue to be spoken just as they are, in the provinces. All we want is that Hindi should be made the medium of an interchange of views between one province and another. I have already said that English will remain as an optional language. It will lose its present position no doubt, but that should not deter us from exercising our judgment in this all-important matter. What we want is a suitable national language, and Hindi, as I have tried to show, is the best one available. So let us choose that.

The solution of the language problem in India requires some little sacrifice. If instead of choosing that language which has the greatest claims, we fight for our respective mother-tongues—for which we have naturally a partiality—it will be hampering the national cause. For a united India a common medium of intercourse, a national language, is absolutely necessary, and for this let us throw overboard our personal predilections and be guided by practical considerations of the highest national importance. The one thing needed now is to provide facilities in every High School for learning Hindi. Let us earnestly do that, and the result will be marvellous. The national language cannot be delayed any more. The day is not far distant when Hindi will occupy its rightful place among the languages in India. We shall no more have to depend on a foreign tongue to speak to our own brothers and sisters of other provinces. A little more effort, and Hindi as a national medium of expression will be an accomplished fact.

## MAHATMA GANDHI ON THE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF INDIA

BY SHIV CHANDRA DATTA, M.A., B.L.

The economic problems of India which have mostly occupied Mahatma Gandhi's thoughts are the following : 1. Poverty and Unemployment. 2. Village Reconstruction. 3. Cow Protection. 4. Muni-

cipal Problems. 5. Capital and Labour. 6. The Consumption of Wine, Tobacco and Tea. 7. Birth-control. An attempt will now be made to give a summary of his views on all these topics.

### 1. POVERTY AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Of the various economic problems of India which have interested Mahatma Gandhi, the two which have attracted his attention most, are the twin evils of poverty and unemployment. He has repeatedly urged that the masses of India are very poor; that they are so poor that they almost lead the lives of cattle; that 30 millions of men do not get even two meals a day. Not only are the people very poor, but their poverty is growing.

One of the main causes of their poverty is, according to him, unemployment.<sup>1</sup> The peasants do not get employment for more than six months every year. For the remaining period, they remain idle. Hence, he says that what the peasants want is not so much food as work. If work is brought to their doors, then they can easily purchase their food with their increased earnings.

How has this unemployment been brought about? The reason is that the peasants have been deprived of their main supplementary occupation, viz., hand-spinning. Who are responsible for depriving the peasants of their supplementary occupation? The parties responsible are, first, the Lancashire Mills, and secondly, the upper and the middle

classes in India. The Lancashire Mills have destroyed the supplementary occupation by sending cheap machine-made products. The upper and the middle classes in India are also responsible, since they have acted as middlemen in importing these foreign products. The peasants have thus been deprived of their supplementary occupation, but they have not been provided with any other subsidiary employment to take the place of hand-spinning. He has pointed out that no doubt in the West also machines deprived the peasants of the occupation of hand-spinning and hand-weaving, but there they were provided with many other new employments.

### REMEDIES OF POVERTY

Various alternative remedies of Indian poverty are considered by Mahatma Gandhi.

1. Agricultural improvement.—He thinks that there are 'tremendous difficulties' in the way of bringing about agricultural improvement, e.g., unwillingness of the Government; lack of capital; refusal of the peasant to take to new methods. The problem of manure cannot be solved without the education of the masses. The size of the holdings cannot be enlarged without revising the family system. For these reasons, agricultural improvement would take generations to bring about. It is not, however, declared to be unnecessary. It is necessary, but it must be preceded by a better and immediate remedy, viz., the revival of the spinning industry. ('Spinning does not replace the contemplated improvement but it will herald it.')

2. Industrialization, i.e., the establishment of factory industries.—It has been already said that according to Gandhiji, industrialism can thrive only on the exploitation of the Indian masses, since there is no other race big enough to be exploited by so large a country as India. Since it can thrive only by exploiting the poor, it cannot possibly remedy the poverty of the masses. Industrialism, therefore, is no remedy

<sup>1</sup> Mahatma Gandhi is of opinion that another important cause of their poverty is the drain on the country's resources caused by 'the marine, the military, the currency, the railway and the revenue policy of the Government.' Some other causes (the social system imposing the burden of maintaining a large family on a single person; the presence of a large number of *Sādhus*; enervating climate; lack of determination to fight against poverty; faulty educational system) mentioned by Prof. Vakil in a series of articles on the Poverty Problem in *Young India* for 1928, are regarded as contributory; *Vide Young India*, 1928, p. 804.

He also points in the same article that the spinning wheel (which will provide the peasants with a supplementary occupation) will bring but *partial relief* and that India's poverty will not be abated so long as the economic exploitation of India by the Government continues unabated.

for pauperism.<sup>3</sup> "Pauperism must go. But industrialism is no remedy." (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, p. 1187.)

It must be said in justice to Mahatma Gandhi, however, that though he is a firm believer in the incapacity of industrialism to solve the poverty problem of the country, he would not oppose the industrialization of the country by those who believe in the efficacy of industrialism to cure the poverty problem.<sup>3</sup>

8. Hand-weaving alone is not the appropriate remedy: for, (1) hand-weaving is not a supplementary, but a whole-time occupation, but what the peasants need is a supplementary occupation; (2) hand-weaving without hand-spinning would make the weavers but feeders to the cotton mills in Manchester, Bombay or Japan, i.e., they would be made dependent on profit-seeking mill-owners; (3) besides, all mills are trying to produce cloths of the designs produced by the weavers.

Hand-weaving, however, is necessary only as supplementary to hand-spinning.

4. The multiplication of cotton mills to provide for India's cloth-supply is not a satisfactory solution, because (1) cotton mills cannot grow up like mushrooms; (2) they would require the importation of foreign machinery; (3) they cannot provide the millions with employment (providing the masses with employment is more important than making India self-sufficient as regards the supply of cloth); (4) they would ex-

ploit the masses; (5) the consequences of the failures of mills are very disastrous.

5. Hand-spinning alone is the only and the best immediate remedy.<sup>4</sup>

The reasons given for this special fitness of hand-spinning are: (1) A large market for hand-spun yarn can be immediately created in India, if imports of foreign cloth are stopped; (2) hand-spinning is easy to learn; (3) there is an ancient tradition behind it; (4) it can be carried on in the homes of the peasants; (5) it can be carried on during leisure hours; (6) it is the only supplementary occupation which can employ millions of men; and (7) it will equitably distribute wealth in millions of cottages.

#### ADDITIONAL MERITS OF THE SPINNING INDUSTRY

Apart from providing the peasants with work during idle hours, spinning will render valuable help in various other ways: (1) if school-children are taught to spin for a certain number of hours every day in the school, education can be made financially self-supporting, at best to a certain extent; (2) beggars can be made to work at this easy occupation; (3) women leading a life of shame can earn their living by taking to spinning; (4) during times of famine and flood, the afflicted men and women can earn at least as much through spinning as through work at Government Relief centres.

Hand-spinning would give rise to a demand for other workers such as weavers, bleachers, dyers, carders and ginners. Hence, it would provide many others with new employment.

Other industries may be encouraged after hand-spinning. But such indus-

<sup>3</sup> "What will you do with unemployment? Industrialize the whole country and become a nation of exploiters" (*Young India*, 1927, p. 276).

<sup>4</sup> "I should have no objection whatsoever to industrial enterprise. . . . Only I would not call it necessarily humanitarian. A humanitarian industrial policy for India means to me a glorified revival of hand-spinning, for through it alone can pauperism, which is blighting the lives of human beings in their own cottages in this land, be immediately removed. Everything else may thereafter be added, so as to increase the productive capacity of the country" (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, p. 719). (*Italics are ours*).

<sup>5</sup> Will Khadi help to make the nation prosperous, or will it simply save the people from starvation? In many passages (*Young India*, 1919-22, Tagore & Co., Madras, pp. 494 and 540) Gandhiji claims the former effect for Khadi, but in at least one passage he says that it will save the people from starvation. "I do claim that if the Charkha becomes universal, it will drive away starvation" (*Young India*, 1927, p. 276).

tries must be 'healthy and life-giving.' It is doubtful whether the establishment of large-scale industries is at all contemplated.

#### DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY OF KHADI

The obstacles in the way of Khadi ('hand-spun and hand-woven cloth'; it is supposed that hand-spinning would be accompanied by a vigorous revival of its necessary concomitant, *viz.*, hand-weaving) as mentioned by Mahatma Gandhi, are : (1) competition of foreign mills; (2) competition of indigenous mills; (3) apathy of the masses; (4) coarseness and dearness of the cloth.

The first obstacle is sought to be removed by asking the people to give up the use of foreign cloths and to take to Khadi only.

The second obstacle is not yet a reality, since if foreign cloth is displaced, it will not be possible to immediately organize the manufacture of the huge quantity of Khadi that would be needed to meet the entire needs of India with regard to cloth. Hence, for a certain length of time, there is room for both Khadi and Indian mill-made cloth. For the present, therefore, the two can co-exist. But Mahatma Gandhi's ultimate objective is undoubtedly the displacement of even Indian mill-made cloth by Khadi.

The apathy of the masses is to be overcome by inducing the classes (including the school students) to spin regularly every day for a certain period. That would give a respectable status to the occupation and would be considerably helpful in inducing the masses to take to it.

The difficulty about coarseness and dearness does not at all arise where peasants spin for the production of their own cloths. Where however yarn is spun for sale organizations will have to be started to purchase yarn from the spinners, to get cloths woven by the weavers and then to sell them in the market. In such circumstances, competitions with mill-made cloth will naturally arise. It will be difficult for Khadi to compete, as it is coarser and

dearer than mill-made cloth.<sup>5</sup> To meet this difficulty, the upper and the middle classes are asked, first, to 'revise their taste' and to adapt themselves to the use of coarse cloth and, secondly, to bear the burden of the extra cost in order to help their poor and starving countrymen. The classes should bear the burden of a self-imposed policy of protection in order to place 'the national industry of India' on its legs again. \*

#### KHADI TO RESIST INDUSTRIALISM

It should be noted with the greatest care that the stress laid on Khadi is not due simply to the fact that it provides a supplementary occupation for the agriculturists. There is another important reason underlying the stress laid on it. And that is that Khadi will be a helpful weapon in resisting the advent of industrialism. This is evident from numerous passages in Mahatmaji's writings. A few are quoted here : "Just as both prince and peasant must eat and clothe themselves, so must both labour for supplying their primary wants. . . . Europe may not realise this vital necessity at the present moment, because it has made of exploitation of non-European races a religion. But it is a false religion bound to perish in the near future. The non-European races will never allow themselves to be for ever exploited. I have endeavoured to show a way out that is peaceful, human and therefore noble. It may be rejected. If it is, the alternative is a tug of war, in which each will try to pull down the other. Then, when non-European races will seek to exploit the Europeans, the truth of the Charkha will have to be realised." "The sword is probably more responsible for misery than opium. Hence do I say that if India takes to the spinning wheel she will contribute to the restriction of armament and peace of the world as no

<sup>5</sup> Admission that Khadi cannot compete with mill-made cloth, *Young India*, 1927, p. 818.

other country and nothing else can." "We must thus restore our ancient and health-giving industry if we would resist industrialism." "India's destiny lies not along the bloody way of the West, of which she shows signs of tiredness, but along the bloodless way of peace that comes from a simple and godly life." "The Charkha at any rate is incapable of harming any body and without it we, and if I may say so, even the world, will go to rack and ruin. We know what Europe has been feeling after the War in which lies were propagated as the highest religion. The world is weary of the after-effects of the War and even as the Charkha is India's comforter to-day, it may be the world's to-morrow." (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, pp. 713, 716, 1108, 1108; *Young India*, 1927, p. 43). The sum and substance of all the passages is that industrialism leads Europe to wars, hence in order to avoid wars we should resist the advent of industrialism and adopt a simple economic system raised on the basis of the Charkha.

That Khadi is to serve the purpose of the first step in re-establishing a simple economic system, is strikingly brought out in the following passage in an article by Mr. C. F. Andrews (whose views in relation to Khadi are almost the same as those of Mahatma Gandhi) in the *Young India* for 1927, p. 315: "The word Khaddar means home-spun and home-woven cotton cloth in which *machinery has played no part at all from start to finish*. The Khaddar ideal thus represents a *very daring declaration that the Machine Age has carried mankind in a wrong direction, bringing along with it the disintegration of earlier moral values. It is leading directly to disaster. The simpler rural civilisation, so it is positively asserted, is the best*. Mahatma Gandhi regards the *ideal of simplicity and closeness to Nature as higher than the ideal of the civilisation of our modern towns together with the factory life which is bound up with them*." (Italics are ours). Mahatma Gandhi

also is of the same opinion. For example, he says at p. 415 of the *Young India* for the same year: "It (the spinning wheel) is a *standing rebuke against the modern mad rush for adding material comfort upon comfort and making life so complicated as to make one doubly unfit for knowing oneself or one's God*." (Italics are ours).

His fondness for a simple economic system (which is sought to be revived through Khadi) will be further evident from the following passages: "It is my claim that as soon as we have completed the boycott of foreign cloth, we shall have evolved so far that we shall necessarily give up the present absurdities and *remodel national life in keeping with the ideal of simplicity and domesticity implanted in the bosom of the masses. We will not then be dragged into an imperialism, which is built upon exploitation of the weaker races of the earth, and the acceptance of a giddy materialistic civilisation protected by naval and air forces that have made peaceful living almost impossible*." "Suffice it to say that the problem to-day is not to bring about *that political and economic reorganisation of our country which disturbs the West to-day*—an organisation which has led to the breaking up of the society by ceaseless struggles, bitterness and rupture between capital and labour. We want to work out *the real political and economic regeneration of the country by Swadeshi*." (Italics are ours.) (*Young India*, 1919-22, Tagore and Co., Madras, pp. 526 and 546).

## 2. VILLAGE RECONSTRUCTION

Mahatma Gandhi's expectation is that spinning will save the peasants from poverty, will infuse new life into them by banishing their lethargy brought about by idleness and will instil into them the habit of co-operating with themselves for their own good. Once these desirable results are secured, the restoration of the village artisans to their own occupations and an all-round improvement of the village will not be

difficult to bring about. "Round the Charkha, that is, amidst the people who have shed their idleness and who have understood the value of co-operation, a national servant would build up a programme of anti-malaria campaign, improved sanitation, settlement of village disputes, conservation and breeding of cattle and hundreds of other beneficial activities" (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, p. 714). "With spinning and weaving coming to their own, there will grow up a number of allied industries. The carpenter, the blacksmith, the washerman and others will find additional work, and a lot of skilled labour. In other words, you will reconstruct the Indian village" (*Young India*, 1927, p. 276).

The aim is, therefore, to retain the self-sufficient and simple villages almost unchanged in their essential characteristics. Life in the villages is sought only to be made a little more tolerable than what it is to-day.

### 3. COW PROTECTION

In India the cow is slaughtered for consumption by non-Hindus. It is also slaughtered by the Mahomedans as a part of their religious obligation.

Protection of the cow means that the cow is to be saved at least from being slaughtered for food.

Protection of the cow is a religious obligation with the Hindus. This religious obligation has arisen because of the economic utility of the cow.

Mahatma Gandhi is of opinion that half the poverty problem of India can be solved if the cow can be protected.

The various suggestions made by him from time to time for the protection of the cow, are as follows :

1. Better treatment.—The Hindus specially should not maltreat the cow and should not practise cruel tortures on her in order to make her yield milk.

2. Improved *Pinjrapoles*.—There are already about 1500 *pinjrapoles* in the country. But the slaughtering of cows, instead of diminishing, is gradually increasing. Hence, the mere multi-

plication of *pinjrapoles* is not enough. The existing *pinjrapoles* should be improved and their functions extended. They should be placed under expert management. They should have wide plots of land all around, where the cattle can graze and take exercise. Dairies should be started for the milch cows. Milk and its products would fetch a good income. Besides, tanneries should be started for the proper treatment and disposal of the hides and the other parts of the carcasses of dead cows. This also would bring some profit to the *pinjrapoles*. The profits derived from the dairies and the tanneries should be utilized in buying up cattle sold to the slaughter-houses, and in maintaining them if they are totally disabled and useless. The *pinjrapoles* should also endeavour to improve the breed of the cow.

The central idea is that not only are the useless cows to be maintained but the cow is to be made so valuable that its slaughter would be economically a dead loss.

3. Altruistic tanneries.—Exports of hides to be stopped. Leather to be manufactured in altruistic tanneries. The profits derived therefrom to be utilized in buying up the cows sold to the slaughter houses.

4. Hides of dead cattle.—The use of hides of dead cattle only is to be encouraged.

5. Release of the buffalo from bondage.—Buffaloes generally yield more milk than cows. Hence, the breeding of the buffaloes has become a profitable occupation. But the breeders resort to the inhuman practice of killing male buffaloes (except those required for stud purposes) at birth, since they are not helpful as draught cattle, nor is their flesh sufficiently remunerative. If cows are made to yield sufficient milk, then the breeding of buffaloes would no longer be necessary. The two-fold functions (drawing loads and yielding milk) now discharged by the she-buffalo can be discharged by the cow and the bullock.

6. Education of the villagers in cattle improvement.—This is very important because, first, every real reform should begin from the villages and, secondly, the villages are the places where the slaughter-houses (taking advantage of the ignorance of the peasants about cattle-breeding) generally draw upon for cattle.

#### 4. MUNICIPAL PROBLEMS

Mahatma Gandhi has received many addresses of welcome from various municipalities in India. In the course of his replies to these municipalities he has laid stress on the various duties which they should make it a point of discharging. These are :

1. The municipal councillors should rise above all petty quarrels and intrigues, should develop a proper sense of civic responsibility and should devote themselves to their duty in a spirit of service.

2. The habits of the people of India are very insanitary. Epidemic diseases like cholera, hook-worm and malaria are due to the insanitary habits of the people. Not poverty, but ignorance of the principles of sanitation is responsible for the prevalence of dirty habits.<sup>a</sup> The municipalities should keep the cities clean and should start model schools of sanitation.

Mahatma Gandhi is opposed to almost everything that comes from the West. But he considers that the Westerners are experts in city-building and hence we might learn a good deal from them as regards the science of municipal sanitation.

3. Municipalities should do all they can to protect the cow in order to ensure a supply of cheap and pure milk. It should be made so cheap that it can be had 'as easily as water.'

<sup>a</sup> Usually Mahatma Gandhi is willing to rely on private efforts for the removal of any evil. But the problem of insanitation is considered by him to be so very serious that he is willing to resort to compulsion in order to change the habits of the people.

4. Food-stuffs sold within the boundaries of a municipality should be clean and unadulterated.

5. A supply of absolutely clean water should be ensured. A supply of clean water is 'the first essential condition of corporate, i.e., of city life.'

6. The suburbs are to be opened up if there is any congestion within the city.

7. The fullest facility is to be given for the education of every child in the municipality.

8. Endeavours should be made to draw people away from gambling dens and liquor-shops, if any, within the municipal area.

#### 5. CAPITAL AND LABOUR

Mahatma Gandhi is fond of styling himself as a labourer. He has mixed much with labourers and has an actual experience of their woes and troubles. Besides, on numerous occasions he has taken a hand in organizing them. Hence his views on the relations between capital and labour are bound to be interesting. His views are mainly the following :

Labour and capital may be struggling with one another in the West. But India's history is not one of strained relations between capital and labour. Nor will the Indian system allow of the introduction of such relations.

Some of the grievances of the labourers are that their wages are insufficient, their dwellings are unsatisfactory and their employers are indifferent to their welfare. The labourers should organize themselves in order to get their grievances reduced. But the organization should be on Indian lines. Violence is to be completely eschewed and rights are to be secured through suffering.

Labour and capital are 'interdependent'. They are 'partners' in the process of production, labour being 'the predominant partner'. Hence, labour should recognize its obligations to capital. Capital also should observe its obligations to labour.



Capitalists in the West are satisfied with looking after the material welfare of the labourers. But Indian capitalists should not be satisfied with that but should aim at a higher ideal. They should also take an interest in their moral welfare and should cease to regard them as their servants. Capitalists should take a 'parental interest' in the welfare of the labourers. But that even is not all. Labourers should even be promoted to the position of proprietors of the mills and factories in which they work.

Perfect co-ordination is possible between capital and labour, and it is in this way that it can be brought about.<sup>7</sup>

#### 6. THE CONSUMPTION OF WINE, TOBACCO AND TEA

Mahatma Gandhi regards wine as responsible for much of the physical and spiritual depravity of man. Hence, he is anxious for the introduction of total prohibition in India. Total prohibition is not difficult to introduce in this country, since the drink-habit is not regarded as respectable in this country and is even prohibited by the Indian religions. The main obstacle in the way is the pro-drink attitude of the Government due to its inability to part with the revenue derived from drink. Hence, according to him, lack of political power alone prevents us from introducing total prohibition.

Failing the better remedy of total prohibition, Gandhiji advocates the less effective remedy of trying to reform the habits of drunkards by persuasion.

<sup>7</sup> Mahatma Gandhi has taken some interest in the economic condition of clerks, whose circumstances he considers in certain respects to be even more deplorable than those of the labourers, owing to the fact that in the families of the former the clerk is usually the only earning member, while in those of the latter, practically all adults are earning members. He suggests two measures for their amelioration: (1) organization, (2) 'educating their wives and dependants to engage in some gainful occupation.' (*Young India*, 1928, p. 189).

The drink evil prevails much among the factory labourers. The latter take to drink because of the environments in which they live and work. Attempts should be made to provide them with centres of recreation where they can congregate in the evening and get innocent drink. In this way they may be tempted away from the public bars.

Smoking is regarded as a much greater evil than drink. The reason is that the evil effects of smoking are not realized until it is too late. The evil effects mentioned are: (1) dirty habits are developed; (2) teeth are damaged; (3) the sense of delicate discrimination is dulled.

Tobacco, tea and coffee should not be consumed, for (1) they are not necessities; and (2) a large amount of money might be saved by stopping their consumption.

#### 7. BIRTH-CONTROL

Mahatma Gandhi is of opinion that India can support twice its present population if its agriculture and land system can be improved and if the peasants get a supplementary occupation. (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, p. 1217).

Hence, restriction of the size of the family need not be resorted to out of fear for over-population.

But it is necessary because of the present political condition of the country.

The method to be resorted to is that of *Brahmacharyya* (self-control).

Married men should exercise complete self-control after the need for progeny has ceased. They are to be taught to resort to *Brahmacharyya* in order to restrict the size of the family.

To what extent is self-control practicable? Mahatmaji assures us from the experience of himself and of his followers that, 'by judicious treatment', self-control 'can be observed without much difficulty.'

Artificial methods of birth-control may or may not be physiologically harmful. But the practice of those

methods is severely condemned for various reasons. First, they would put a premium upon vice; secondly, the opportunity of developing strength of will born of struggling with, and conquering one's passions would be lost; and, thirdly, much precious vitality would be wasted.

#### INTEREST IN A FEW OTHER PROBLEMS

We have till now related Mahatma Gandhi's attitude towards the problems of Indian Economics which have attracted his attention most. His attitude towards some other problems which have occasionally drawn his attention will now be dealt with.

1. Third-Class Railway Passengers.—After his return from South Africa, in spite of the amplitude of his means, he used to subject himself to the discomforts of third-class travel in order to personally experience the inconveniences and discomforts suffered by the third-class passengers. In a letter to the Press in 1917<sup>a</sup> and in a lecture delivered at a Social Service Conference<sup>b</sup> held in Calcutta in the same year, he discussed the grievances of third-class passengers. The same topic is also touched upon in his Autobiography.

The various grievances of third-class passengers, especially mentioned, are : (1) overcrowding; (2) dirtiness of the compartments and the closets; (3) the extremely unsatisfactory arrangements in the *Mosafir-khanas* (third-class waiting rooms); and (4) the high-handedness and callousness of the railway officials in their dealings with third-class passengers.

The passengers themselves do not escape condemnation. They are severely criticised for their attitude of helplessness as regards their own complaints and also for their own rudeness, dirty habits, selfishness and ignorance.

2. Free Trade *vs.* Protection.—Free trade is responsible for the ruin of the

Indian peasantry. It is also responsible for the destruction of Indian shipping. "No new trade can compete with foreign trade without protection." Hence Mahatma Gandhi is prepared to welcome protection for the cotton industry, Indian shipping and 'other useful industries.' Only he would like that preference should be given to Khadi. "I would any day welcome protection for mill industry, although I give and would always give preference to hand-spun khaddar. Indeed I would give protection to all useful industries" (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, p. 1271).

Is it proper to develop the steel industry by protection? Mahatma Gandhi refrains from giving a definite answer. His position is explained in the following statement: "Of what use they can possibly be at the present moment, I do not know; nor do I know the merits of the proposal regarding the Steel Works." (Cf. his remarks in connection with the Iron Works started in Mysore, *Young India*, 1927, p. 283).

3. Co-operation.—Gandhiji does not regard the co-operative movement as 'a panacea for all evils.' But he thinks that it is capable of much good. In order, however, that the movement may be beneficial it is necessary that it should be confined to men of morals, and that careful watch should be kept over the manner in which the loans advanced by co-operative societies are utilized. Special emphasis is laid on the necessity of ensuring the moral growth of existing Societies before their number is multiplied. The efforts of the Co-operative Societies to revive the cottage industries is looked upon with marked approval.<sup>10</sup>

Mahatma Gandhi has not himself taken any active part in the Co-operative Movement, but he regards the organization of the spinners and weavers, that is being pushed on by

<sup>a</sup> *Speeches and Writings*, G. A. Natesan & Co., p. 268.

<sup>b</sup> *Speeches and Writings*, p. 371.

<sup>10</sup> Vide lecture on the "Moral Basis of Co-operation" (*Speeches and Writings*, p. 261).

him, as in itself a very big Co-operative Movement.

4. Emigration.—Emigration is regarded as harmful. The emigrants may earn more money abroad, but they do not return better men. Besides, their wants multiply after their visits to foreign lands (*Speeches and Writings*, p. 288). The difficult problem of emigration may be solved by providing the would-be emigrants with the occupation of spinning (*Young India*, 1919-22, Tagore and Co., p. 493).

5. Tree Protection.—The fulfilment of every human need is a religious necessity. ("All religions is presumably in response to the human aspiration or need. Religion is some irresistible binding force. The cow was a peremptory need and we had cow protection in India. Digging of wells where water is scarce is a religion. It would be ludicrous to dig wells where the water-supply is inexhaustible. Similarly, whilst tree plantation would be superfluous in, say Travancore, in some parts of India it is a religious necessity." (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, p. 1297). Hence, in barren tracts such as Cutch and Kathiawad, the protection and plantation of trees and the teaching of practical botany are stressed as a religious necessity.

### EDUCATION

A full statement of Mahatma Gandhi's thoughts on current economic questions has now been completed.

In the present-day world, education is of the greatest importance from the economic standpoint. Hence, even while engaged in a study of Mahatma Gandhi's economic ideas, we should briefly notice the nature of his thoughts on education.

Mahatma Gandhi has written and spoken a good deal on questions of education. An idea will now be given of the most important elements in his thoughts on education.

These thoughts will be divided under three heads : (1) defects of the present

system of education ; (2) subjects to be taught ; (3) additional suggestions.

Defects of the Present System.—The present system of education manufactures only clerks and Government servants ; it designs us only to be parts of a huge foreign machine ; needless palatial buildings are built for schools and colleges ('the whole trend is to think of the privileged and not of the masses') ; the training for occupations is neglected ; a foreign language is adopted as the medium of instruction ; indigenous culture and spirituality are ignored.

Subjects to be Taught.—(1) Agriculture and hand-weaving (the majority of Indians are peasants and weavers) ; (2) carpentry ; (3) masonry ; (4) practical training in the laws of hygiene and sanitation ; (5) art of rearing children ; (6) military training ; (7) music ; (8) gymnastic and body-training ; (9) spinning ('the students may learn anything but let it centre round the Charkha') ; (10) practical botany (in tracts where tree plantation is an economic necessity).

Some Additional Suggestions.—Western civilization not to be imitated ; spirituality to be fostered ; religious training to be imparted before a knowledge of the letters ; manual<sup>11</sup> (industrial) training required (to teach the dignity of labour and to enable the students to partly pay for their education,—it is in the way alone that education can be made freely available to all in a country as poor as India) ; European dress and modern luxuries not to be imitated ; education to be imparted through the provincial vernacular ; Hindusthani to be taught as the national language (English to become the language of commerce and international diplomacy and hence to be learnt by a few) ; the family system not to be overlooked in education ; indigenous methods of teaching arithmetic to be adopted ; the teaching of science to be made more

<sup>11</sup> Agriculture, hand-spinning and hand-weaving favoured, training in other arts and crafts not opposed.

practical; teachers must be men of faith and character; students to be sent to join relief works from time to time during their school and college career ('the end of education is service').

Compulsory education is not favoured, as Mahatma Gandhi is usually

against all compulsion. But he does not definitely oppose it.

The function of women, according to him, is not to earn money; hence, the education of females should be the same as that of males up to a certain stage; later, it should be different.

## ASHTAVAKRA SAMHITA

BY SWAMI NITYASWARUPANANDA

विश्वं स्फुरति यत्रेदं तरङ्गा इव सागरे ।

तत्तमेव न सन्देहश्चिन्मूर्त्ते विज्वरो भव ॥७॥

( ७ O ) चिन्मूर्त्त<sup>१</sup> Intelligence itself यत्र in which इदं this विश्व<sup>२</sup> universe सागरे in the ocean तरङ्गा: waves इव like स्फुरति is manifested तत् that त्वम् you एव verily ( भवसि are ) ( त्वं you ) विज्वरः free from fever भव be.

7. O you Intelligence, you indeed are that in which the universe<sup>1</sup> manifests itself like waves on the ocean. Be<sup>2</sup> you free from fever<sup>3</sup>.

[<sup>1</sup> Universe etc.—The universe is the same as the Self.

<sup>2</sup> Be etc.—When one realises that one is the same as the universe, one does not hanker after its joys or is any way entangled by it.

<sup>3</sup> Fever—the fever of worldliness—desires for its joys gross and subtle, and fear and ignorance about it,—all the complications that arise out of the ignorance of the true nature of the universe.]

श्रद्धस्व तात श्रद्धस्व नात्र मोहं कुरुष्व भोः ।

ज्ञानस्वरूपो भगवानात्मा त्वं प्रकृतेः परः ॥८॥

तात Child श्रद्धस्व have faith श्रद्धस्व have faith भोः O you भव in this मोहं mistake न not कुरुष्व make न् you ज्ञानस्वरूपः Knowledge itself भगवान् lord आत्मा Self प्रकृतेः than Nature परः greater ( भवसि are ).

8. Have<sup>1</sup> faith, my son, have faith. Never<sup>2</sup> delude yourself in this. You are Knowledge itself, you are the lord, you are the Self, and you are superior<sup>3</sup> to Nature.

[<sup>1</sup> Have etc.—Ashtavakra is impressing the true nature of the Self on the mind of the disciple.

<sup>2</sup> Never etc.—Till one has actually realised the Self, one finds it hard to believe that the Self is really what the sages describe it to be and that the universe is really nothing.

<sup>3</sup> Superior etc.—Unaffected by Nature and controlling it.]

गुणैः संविष्टो देहस्तिष्ठत्यायाति याति च ।

आत्मा न गन्ता नागन्ता किमेनमनुशोचसि ॥९॥

गुणैः With the organs of senses संवेष्टितः covered देहः body तिष्ठति stays आयाति comes याति goes च and आत्मा Self न not गता goes अगता comes किम् why एनम् this अनुशीचसि lament.

9. The body covered with the organs of senses comes, stays and goes. The Self<sup>1</sup> neither comes nor goes. Why do you then mourn it<sup>2</sup>?

[<sup>1</sup> *Self etc.*—The Self is beyond the body and does not partake of its nature. The body changes, the Self does not.

<sup>2</sup> *It*—the changes of the body, such as death.]

देहस्तिष्ठतु कल्पान्तं गच्छत्यद्यैव वा पुनः ।

क वृद्धिः क च वा हानिस्तव चिन्मात्ररूपिणः ॥१०॥

देहः Body कल्पान्तं to the end of the cycle तिष्ठतु remain पुनः again अद्य to-day एव verily गच्छतु go वा or चिन्मात्ररूपिणः तव of you who are pure Intelligence क where वृद्धिः increase क where च वा and हानिः decrease.

10. Let the body last to the end of the *Kalpa* (cycle) or let it go even to-day. Where<sup>1</sup> is there any increase or decrease in you who are pure Intelligence?

[<sup>1</sup> *Where etc.*—The conditions of the body make not the slightest difference to the Self. Therefore fear not death.]

त्वय्यनन्तमहाम्मोद्यौ विश्ववीचिः स्वभावतः ।

उदेतु वास्तमायातु न ते वृद्धिर्न वा क्षतिः ॥११॥

अनन्तमहाम्मोद्यौ In the infinite ocean त्वयि in you विश्ववीचिः the wave of the universe स्वभावतः spontaneously उदेतु rise अस्तम् आयातु subside वा or ते your वृद्धिः increase न not ( भवति is ) क्षतिः loss न not ( भवति is ) वा or.

11. Let the waves of the universe rise or fall of their own<sup>1</sup> accord in you who are the infinite Ocean. That means no gain<sup>2</sup> or loss to you.

[In the preceding verse, complete disidentification with the body and its changes is preached. In the present, complete disidentification with the universe is enjoined.

<sup>1</sup> *Own etc.*—The universe is endlessly going from creation to creation with a period of dissolution between. But that should not affect the Self. The Self is beyond time and causation. Creation and dissolution are in time. We must not think ourselves as their creature, but above and beyond them.

<sup>2</sup> *Gain etc.*—Just as waves when they rise do not add to the ocean, or take away from it when they subside, so the creation of the universe which is really the same as the Self, does not add anything to the Self, nor does it take anything away from it when it is dissolved.]

तात चिन्मात्ररूपोऽसि न ते भिन्नमिदं जगत् ।

अतः कस्य कथं कुत्र हेयोपादेयकल्पना ॥१२॥

तात Child ( त्वं you ) चिन्मात्ररूपः pure Intelligence itself असि are इदं this जगत् world ते from you भिन्नं different न not ( भवति is ) अतः therefore कस्य whose

कथं how कुत्र where हेयोपादयकल्पना the thought of the rejectable and the acceptable ( भवति is ).

12. My child, you are pure Intelligence itself. This universe is nothing different<sup>1</sup> from you. Therefore<sup>2</sup> who will accept<sup>3</sup> and reject? And how and where would he do so?

[<sup>1</sup> *Different etc.*—When we try to grasp the reality of the universe, we find it to be our own self, which is pure Intelligence itself.

<sup>2</sup> *Therefore etc.*—If we know the universe as the pure Intelligence and as our self, the distinctions of good or bad in the universe cannot arise. Only "I" exist. I cannot reject or accept myself. There is also no instrument,—the mind—for such rejection or acceptance. And there is no space or reality outside me from where I can accept or where I can reject.

<sup>3</sup> *Accept etc.*—This transcendental attitude is possible only when we realise the universe as the Self. So long as we know it as phenomenal, there must be necessarily the distinctions of good and evil. Ashtavakra urges us to outgrow the present limited and distorted vision.]

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### In This Number

As usual, the number begins with *Discourses on Jnana Yoga* by SWAMI VIVEKANANDA. We draw the special attention of our readers to the Swami's remarks on the nature and limits of the knowledge of the Perfected Ones. We dare say this subject has engaged the attention of many at some time or other. . . . *An Unpublished Letter of Swami Vivekananda to Sister Christine*, though short, is a revelation of the character of both the Swami and the disciple. We regret to say that Sister Christine passed away on the morning of the 27th March in New York. . . . ROMAIN ROLLAND contributes *America at the Time of Vivekananda's First Visit* to the present number. It is a very interesting essay, as every reader will admit. M. Rolland's extraordinary genius enlivens whatever it dwells upon, and his penetrative vision easily discovers the larger, cosmic movements behind the passing events, as is well illustrated by his present article. We wish space had not prevented us from including the footnotes, for these with M. Rolland are really parts of the text itself. . . . DR. MAHENDRANATH SIRCAR,

M.A., PH.D., whose *Phases of Immediate Experience* we publish in this issue, is not unknown to our readers. The Professor is a learned writer and can well claim a very close attention from his readers. The present article which will be completed next month, deals with various grades of supernormal experience. This is a kind of introduction to a series of essays to follow, in which the author will deal with the intuition, vision and truth of the Upanisads. . . . *A National Language for India* by SWAMI MADHAVANANDA deals with a crying problem of Modern India. The Swami is a monk of the Ramakrishna Order. He was president of the Mayavati Advaita Ashrama for many years before he went to San Francisco, U.S.A., to take charge of the Vedanta Centre there. He returned to India last year. The Swami is quite proficient in the language, the cause of which he so ably pleads. . . . SHIV CHANDRA DATTA, M.A., B.L. contributes his second article on Indian Economics,—*Mahatma Gandhi on the Economic Problems of India*. He will next deal with the views of Prof. Benoy Kumar Sircar. The articles are designed to give dis-

*passionate* accounts of these eminent workers and thinkers in the field of Indian economics, without the slightest criticism in any way.

### The Passing of Sister Christine

It is with a heavy heart that we record the passing away of Sister Christine on the 27th March last in the city of New York. Sister Christine's original name was Miss Christina Greenstidel and she was a resident of Detroit in America, where she had the good fortune of listening to the lectures of Swami Vivekananda in 1894. She was, as she once told us, much struck by the Swami's great love for his motherland, so much so that she at once procured books on India in order to acquaint herself with the greatness of the land which was the object of so much adoration on the part of the Swami. This was significant, for she was destined soon to make India her own adopted country.

The Sister did not meet the Swami personally at Detroit. But his influence worked on her. And very soon she went with a dear friend to meet him and, if possible, to be accepted as his disciple, to Thousand Island Park where the Swami was then staying with a band of chosen disciples. They reached there on a night which was dark and rainy. But the Swami at once came down to receive them. When they saw him they could only say: "We have come to you just as we would go to Jesus if he were still on earth and ask him to teach us." He looked kindly at them and said gently: "If only I possessed the power of Christ to set you free!" and he asked them to join the household. It was there that the Sister became a disciple of the Swami and received the best of her training from him. The Swami had a very great love for this gentle disciple of his, as will be evident from a letter which we publish in page 211. And he often used to say: "My disciples who travelled hundreds of miles to find me and they came in the night and in the rain!"

At Thousand Island Park, Swamiji devoted a considerable part of his time and energy to thinking out solutions for the various problems of India, and he chose the Sister for his educational work for Indian women. Accordingly the Sister came to Calcutta in the early part of 1902, a few months before the Swami's passing. In the autumn of 1903, when Sister Nivedita started her Girls' School in the Baghbazar quarter of Calcutta, she joined her with great enthusiasm. Sister Nivedita herself said: "In the autumn of 1903, the whole work for Indian women was taken up and organised by an American disciple, Sister Christine, and to her, and her faithfulness and initiative, alone, it owes all its success up to the present. . . . Before her advent our school consisted of classes for little girls, in which Kindergarten methods were practised with more or less success. When Sister Christine, however, took up management at the end of 1903, it was with the intention of devoting herself specially to the cause of married women and widows. This effort she added to that already established, and, by this means, greatly extended the scope of the work." Sister Christine was no novice in educational work, for before she came to India, she had held a lucrative post in the educational department of the city of Detroit.

She continued her work in the Nivedita School with a whole-hearted devotion till her departure for America about 1914. After the passing away of Sister Nivedita in 1911, the entire work had fallen on her shoulders, but she worked on untired and with unflagging zeal. She was purity, sweetness and gentleness personified, and she naturally made a profound impression on all who came in contact with her.

Sister Christine returned to India in 1924. But soon her health broke down, and though she rallied a little about 1927, she had to go back to America the next year again. The authorities of the Ramakrishna Mission very recently invited her to come to India to direct the affairs of the School. But a

greater call sounded in her ears and she passed away.

She was a rare soul. She was one of the best beloved of the Swami's disciples, and undoubtedly she has passed through the gate of death to that realm of eternal peace and joy, to which she in truth belonged.

### Vedantists in America

We extract the following paragraphs from an article under the above name contributed by Dr. Sudhindra Bose, M.A., Ph.D., to the March number of *The Modern Review*. Dr. Bose is well-known to readers of Indian journals in which his writings often appear. He has been a resident of America for many years, and is a lecturer in the Iowa University, U.S.A. The testimony of an enlightened mind not related to the activities of our Swamis in America, is certainly worth recording. Says Dr. Bose :

"Modern India, in its hurly-burly of politics, often forgets those noble souls who are spreading the light of the Vedanta in America. Any one with half an eye can see that the message of these consecrated men has been beneficial not only to America, but to India as well. On the one hand they have placed before America, torn and distracted by hundreds of Christian sects, an ennobling ideal of universal religion, and on the other, they have helped to build a bridge of better understanding and appreciation between India and the New World. Their services in multiplying points of rational contact between these two countries are invaluable. They have at least made a magnificent beginning in bridging a gulf between the two great peoples. Those who belittle the services of these selfless men are in the kindergarten state of their thinking. . . . To-day there are six Vedanta centres served by nearly a dozen Swamis. They are all members of the order of Ramkrishna-Vivekananda." We should add that the number of centres has increased in the mean time, there being

as many as nine well-established centres of work, not to mention a few more which are not yet well-grounded. And we have seven Swamis working there, and there are insistent calls for more. Dr. Bose continues :

"The record of the activities of this group of devoted workers in the cause of humanity calls to mind the early Buddhist missionaries who went from India far and wide, and preached the gospel of Gautama Buddha. Their work was not wasted. The seed is living. The Swamis are men of vision, seers, dreamers of dreams.

"The Indian missionaries have not come to the United States with a mercantile outlook. In this respect they stand apart and above the ordinary run of Christian missionaries who are eager to have the flag follow the Gospel. Consider, for instance, the case of Henry Morton Stanley who went to rescue David Livingston, the Scottish missionary to Africa. Stanley on his return from the 'Dark Continent' delivered a speech before the Manchester Chamber of Commerce urging it to support the missionary cause in the Congo.

"The religion of the Vedas as taught by Indian missionaries is as different from the calico-Christianity of Stanley as North Pole is from the South Pole. Moreover, the Indian missionaries are men of education, culture, and refinement. They are, without any exception, men of exemplary character. They honestly try to live up to their highest ideals. It often thrills me to compare them with many Christian stalwarts like, for example, Sir John Hawkins—that pious English burglar and pirate who enjoined his men to 'Love one another' and 'Serve God daily' while he kidnapped African negroes to sell them into slavery. Even to this day there are innumerable Bible pests who preach one thing and practise another.

"Let me mention here the six Vedanta centres in this country :

"The Vedanta Society of New York is under the direction of Swami Bodhananda. He has been in New York City



for over fifteen years. Associated with him is Swami Jnaneswarananda.

"The Vedanta Centre of Boston, is under the charge of Swami Paramananda.

"The Vedanta Centre of Providence enjoys the leadership of Swami Akhilananda.

"The Ananda Ashrama of La Crescenta, California, is headed also by Swami Paramananda.

"The Vedanta Society of San Francisco has, as its spiritual leader, Swami Dayananda. It came into being as the direct result of Swami Vivekananda's work in San Francisco in 1900. It is the second oldest Vedanta centre in America. Like the Vedanta Society of New York, the San Francisco organization has been a sort of training post for many new Swamis from India. It has also the distinction of having the first Hindu temple in the United States.

"Last, but not least, is the Vedanta Society of Portland, Oregon. It is presided over by Swami Prabhavananda."

There are a few more centres. There is a Santi Ashrama in California. And lately two centres have been started in Hollywood and Chicago under Swami Prabhavananda and Swami Jnaneswarananda respectively. The Portland centre is now directed by Swami Vividishananda who lately went there from India.

"Volumes could be written about the Swamis who are connected with the Vedanta movement in America. . . . They are men among men. They do not need my commendation.

"There is in the United States a babel of religious views; but the leaders of the Vedanta movement are not concerned with any particular creed. They preach a universal religion of truth, justice, and love. 'Vedanta is antagonistic to no religions or philosophies,' observes Swami Bodhananda of New York, 'but is in perfect harmony with them all. What humanity is to mankind, what life is to living being—that, the Vedanta is to religions. It is their inner unity—common essence, and

as such has no quarrel with them. The whole can have no quarrel with the parts. Vedanta has room for all religions. Nay, it embraces them all.' . . .

"There are many in America who are not satisfied with the present system of Christian religion with its theology. Its God is the blood-thirsty Jehova of the Old Testament, hostile to strangers, full of fury and bombast. Enlightened Americans are disgusted with it. They want rational explanation of life and existence. Then there is another class of Americans who believe in religion, just 'religion,' and want to know the practical aspects of religion. There is still another group of people who are scientifically minded. They want a scientific religion. These three types of people do not and cannot get the help they need from any of the organized religions of America. For them the teachings of Vedanta offer a refuge. . . .

"The Swamis are of the opinion that Vedanta is intensely practical. It puts faith in one's own self by emphasizing that all power and perfection is already within the individual. The difference between the perfected man and the ordinary man is not qualitative but quantitative, not in essence but in the degree of manifestation.

"Christian missionaries in India, with a few exceptions, breed ill-will, hatred and hot antagonism. During my last visit to India, I heard this view explained by scores of men. They told me that these uninvited guests abuse the hospitality of the nation. The proselytizers are among the sharpest critics of Indian national aspirations, and not infrequently seek to influence the bureaucracy and even to control legislation. Whether just or unjust, these are among the most important causes of the existing dislike against Christian missionaries.

"Now, the Indian missionaries never meddle with American political and social problems. They confine themselves exclusively to the field of religion, or to be more accurate, the message of Vedanta. They try to interest Americans through lectures, interviews, discus-

sion classes, talks over the radio, and informal social intercourse. In addition they all hold regular Sunday services. Needless to say that all Americans are not interested in religion. Only those who have learned to think for themselves, and are looking for a rational way of life feel drawn towards the Vedanta.

"The task of the Swamis is by no means easy. Most Americans are brought up on mass-emotion and seldom think rationally. From mere inertia of habit they swallow such puerile dogmas as: 'Man is born in sin and iniquity'; 'the world was created in seven days'; 'Christianity is the only true religion'; 'this is our only chance, after death we shall remain buried in the grave until the Day of Judgment, when there will be a bodily resurrection and we shall go to eternal heaven or eternal hell.' Only people who have 'grown up and are not simply grown grey-haired can turn away from such nonsense, and listen to the appeals of reason.

"The intellectual presentation of Vedanta is not always pleasant to American 'sermon tasters'. The Swamis, so far as I know, keep Vedanta in its original purity and majesty, and never stoop to adulterate it with healing and mystery-mongering. Moreover they do not seek to make converts. . . .

"The prospects for Vedanta work in this country, according to those who are in close touch with it, are bright. The

demand for Vedanta societies is increasing rapidly. The people with whom the Swamis come into contact are mostly sympathetic towards India and Indian philosophy. One must not forget, however, that they have to work against many handicaps: foreign customs, foreign tongue, opposition of Christian churches, and inherited inertia. Besides, the American mass mind craves for entertainments and emotionalism. Where the masses find these things, they flock by hundreds. The Swamis avoid all sensationalism as pestilence, and yet they get a good hearing. . . .

"The Eastern thought as developed in Asia, particularly in India, seems to be coming again to rescue the Western world from materialism. 'The East', asks Mrs. Adams Beck in her *Story of Oriental Philosophy*, 'haughty, aristocratic, spiritual and other-worldly, leisured, tolerant of all faiths and philosophies, moving on vast spiritual orbits about the central sun: the West, eager, hurried, worldly, absorbed in practical and temporary affairs, opinionated, contemptuous of other peoples and faiths, money-loving less for money's sake than its pursuit, younger, infinitely younger in tastes and psychic development than the East—what point of fusion can there be between the philosophies of these two divergent branches of the same great root?' That question is being answered by the Vedantists in America."

## REVIEW

**THE RELIGION WE NEED.** By S. Radhakrishnan. Ernest Benn, Ltd., London. 32 pp. Price 1s. net.

In this little book the famous Professor has boldly taken up the challenge of atheism which is the chief characteristic of the modern age, and conclusively proved that we cannot avoid God and Religion however we may try. In the book the author has first analysed the modern tendencies and shown that the theory of evolution is incapable of undermining our faith in God. For did not Darwin himself say: "The births both of the individual and the species

are equally parts of that grand sequence of events which the mind refuses to accept as the result of blind chance. The understanding revolts from such a conclusion." But the author does not ask us like the fundamentalists to shut our eyes to the facts of modern thought and inquiry, nor is he afraid of the light of scientific discoveries, for, according to him, "science is essentially spiritual in temper and pleadings. Instead of abolishing mysteries of the world, it has deepened them." About the ultimate reality, the author frankly confesses that it "is difficult to grasp and impossible to define. We

can be sure of what God is not, but not of what God is."

The reason why people are scared away by religion is that they have no real idea about it. The author nicely clears that point when he says, "Religious life does not consist in the acceptance of academic abstractions or the celebrations of ceremonies. It is not sentimental adoration or cringing vague social idealism. It is spiritual certainty offering us strength and solace in the hour of need and sorrow. It is the conviction that love and justice are at the heart of the universe, that the spirit which gave rise to man will further his perfection. It is the faith which grips us even when we suffer defeat, the assurance that though the waves on the shore may be broken, the ocean conquers nevertheless. . . . This is release from one's bondage, escape from one's littleness. This is to have the peace which the world can neither give nor take away." According to him, self-perfection is the aim of religion, but until this aim takes hold of society as a whole, the world is not safe for civilisation and humanity. About the practical aspect of the problem the Professor thus states in soul-stirring words: "Religious life is a perilous adventure to be carried out on the principle of 'die to live'. It is well that it should be so. An heroic temper does not confuse happiness with the mere pursuit of pleasure. We need not be sorry that we do not find ourselves in a world where there are no unfriendly forces to master. The aim of life is not safety and comfort, but heroism and happiness. The cosmic supplies the conditions by which personalities can be perfected."

The book is highly illuminating. We have enjoyed it immensely.

**THE NEW VEDA OR JEEVAN VEDA.**  
By Keshub Chunder Sen. Pluck Office, 62, Mission Road, Karachi, or Peace Cottage, 84, Upper Circular Road, Calcutta. 149 pp. Price As. 8.

The book is an English translation of sixteen sermons delivered by Keshub Chunder Sen from the pulpit of the Bharatvarshiya Brahma Mandir, Calcutta, in the nineties of the last century. The fire of devotion, which was the chief characteristic of the Brahmananda lies embedded in the pages of the book and is sure to blaze forth when brought in contact with kindred spirits. The book also gives a glimpse into the inner life of Keshub Chunder. He says: "The first word of the scripture of my life is Prayer. When no one had offered to help me, . . . there surged up in my heart an impulse, a voice crying 'Pray, 'Pray'." "By continuing in prayer I began to gather the strength as of a lion,—strength boundless and irresistible! Lo! I had no more the same body, no more the old spirit. . . . I shook my fists at sin and prayed. Doubt, disbelief, and temptation, to these I presented a grim, determined front. Every evil fled when I threatened to pray. Thus as with child-like insistence, I sat, a suppliant, at the feet of the Deity, I would exact some boon or blessing. Is there something to be won? Who would give? Where should I go? Who was to show the way? Who would carry my sins away? In all things prayer was my help."

When attempts are not wanting in the present age to cure us of God and religion, circulation of books like the present one cannot be too much wished for.

One would naturally like to see such a nice book with better printing and get-up.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### A CORRECTION

In the *News and Reports* for March we wrote under the heading, "A Prospective Sevashrama at Hrikhikesh," that a lady of Rangpur had contributed a sum of Rs. 2000/- for the construction of a well, and a gentleman of Rangoon had promised to build a ward consisting of 2 beds for which he had donated Rs. 1200/-. The statement was unfortunately wrong. Those contributions have been made to the R. K.

Mission Sevashrama at Kankhal, and not to the one to be started at Hrikhikesh.

### VEDANTA SOCIETY, CHICAGO, U.S.A.

The inauguration ceremony of the Vedanta Society of Chicago, U.S.A., was celebrated on the 19th of January at 8 p.m., at the New Masonic Temple. The delightfully decorated Hall was filled up to its utmost capacity by a crowd drawn from the noblest of Chicago's society.

With glowing tributes to the memory of the great Swami Vivekananda who sowed the seeds of Indian philosophy and religion on the soil of Chicago during the World's Fair of 1893, Prof. Archibald G. Baker of the University of Chicago and Mrs. Carey W. Rhodes, a well-known social worker of Chicago and a lover of Hindu philosophy, introduced to the public, Swami Gnaneshwarananda who came from New York to open the new centre at Chicago. A wireless message of blessings and congratulations from Swami Shivananda, the President of the Ramakrishna Mission, Belur, and also messages of congratulations and goodwill from all the Swamis of the Order now working in America, together with the messages of many prominent American ladies and gentlemen were read out, which were highly appreciated by the audience.

Sreejot Harindra Chattopadhyay, the young poet of India, brother of Sreenaty Sarojini Naidu, recited a poem of his own composition, "the Light of the Soul," at the opening of the programme, which created a wonderful atmosphere for the solemn occasion.

The Society is at present holding its regular Sunday Services at the New Masonic Temple Hall. The Office and Study Room of the Society are located at the Plymouth Building, 417 S. Dearborn St., Room 201.

The newly established Vedanta Society of Chicago has removed a long-felt want, felt very keenly by all the Indians as well as those Americans who are familiar with the work of Swami Vivekananda in America.

#### RAMAKRISHNA STUDENTS' HOME, CALCUTTA

The Home which is conducted on the lines of a Brahmacharya Ashrama by the monks of the Ramakrishna Order specially for poor youths going up for higher education in the Calcutta University, has completed the eleventh year of its existence in 1929. The authorities of the Home believe that the ideals of all education, all training should be man-making, and to effect this they devote their whole energy. Here the students are taught to realise the fact that "Education is not a means for escaping labour, it is a means for dignifying labour."

In 1929 twenty bighas of land at Gauripur near Dum-Dum Cantt. came to the possession of the Home for its vocational section. During 1929, the year under review, an adjacent plot of rent-free land measuring 68

bighas 12 kathas was purchased for Rs. 6,360/-. It is the purpose of the Home authorities to construct their permanent home on it. The site, however, is not at present fit to build upon. Low-lying lands have to be filled up and two tanks re-excavated. If these improvements can be made, the present site will prove very suitable for permanent residence. At present the Home is located in a rented house in the din and bustle of the City. City life has become expensive and detrimental to health. The new site which is 9 miles from the Calcutta Government House, is a solitary and healthy place. Besides, it is a suitable place for agriculture and dairy-farming. During the year under review the Students' Home Farm has made much progress.

The total number of students on the roll was 24 at the end of the year, 13 students appeared for different University examinations and all came out successful. Religious classes were held thrice weekly for the exposition of the Upanisads, Gita and the R. K. Mission literature. The general health of the students was satisfactory.

Total receipts during the year in the *General Fund* together with previous year's balance came to Rs. 9,534-0-6; total disbursements amounted to Rs. 6,440-0-0. Total receipts during the year in the *Building Fund* together with previous year's balance came to Rs. 17,634-5-11; total disbursements amounted to Rs. 9,634-4-2.

To develop the land, re-excavate the tanks and construct simple structures for the accommodation of at least one hundred students, a sum of a lakh of rupees is required. The Home appeals to the generous and enlightened public to help with necessary funds this attempt of the Ramakrishna Mission in chalking out a worthy educational programme for youths, and thus removing a long-felt want of the country.

All contributions, however small, will be thankfully received by the *President, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, Bengal*, or by the *Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, 7, Haldar Lane, Bowbazar, Calcutta*.

#### RAMAKRISHNA STUDENTS' HOME, PATNA

The second annual report of the institution from April 1928 to March 1929 is a good record of work. The Home was start-

ed in July 1927, with the object of providing college students a healthy spiritual, intellectual and physical training as a necessary supplement to the University education. It is mainly meant for poor students. Paying students who are willing to receive such additional training, are also admitted. The Home is a college students' hostel under the direct care of Sannyasins. There is practically no difference in spirit between the ancient Brahmacharya Ashrama and this Home. Almost all household duties are performed by the students themselves.

The total number of students on the roll was 11 at the beginning of April 1928; 7 students sat for the University examinations during the period under review, and all except one came out successful. For religious training regular classes were held thrice weekly on the Gita and the Works of Swami Vivekananda. Necessary arrangements are made for the intellectual and physical training. The students of the Home have formed a Seva Samity. There are 4 night schools under the guidance of the Samity. The Samity nurse the sick and help the deserving poor in every way.

The total receipts including last year's balance were Rs. 1,527-4-6 and the total expenditure Rs. 1,507-4-6.

The immediate needs of the Home are: (1) A commodious building with library, play-ground, etc., on a permanent site, to provide for a larger number of poor, indigent students—which in a modest calculation requires not less than Rs. 20,000/-. (2) A general fund for library and gymnasium, and for better food-stuff, clothings, books, college and examination fees. For this another Rs. 20,000/- is required. We hope that there will be no two opinions about rendering financial help to this cause. The Home appeals to everyone interested in the progress of the youths of this country to contribute to the funds to the best of his ability. All contributions to be sent to *Swami Avyaktananda, Ramakrishna Ashrama, P. O. Bankipore, Patna.*

**R. K. MISSION VIDYAPITH,  
DEOGHAR, BIHAR**

The report for the year 1929 shows a good progress made during the year. The

Vidyapith is a High School for Hindu boys run on residential lines. Situated in a healthy and beautiful place very close to the holy temple of Vaidyanath, the institution has become well known to the public. This institution, like other residential schools of the R. K. Mission, is conducted on the lines of an ancient Gurukula Ashrama. It aims at giving the boys an all-round training, physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual. The institution maintains some poor and deserving students free and at concession rates. Most of the teachers of the Vidyapith are Hindu Sannyasins.

During the year under review the number of students on the roll was 70. On account of the special attention paid by the authorities to physical exercise the health of the students was satisfactory. Religion is made to form here the basis of the training. Here all the important Hindu festivals and ceremonies in honour of prophets and saints are observed. Religious classes are held in the morning and evening and devotional songs and hymns are sung. Dignity of labour and self-help form a part of the students' daily routine. Small patches of garden are managed by groups of boys. They also generally maintain their own discipline, do nursing, organise sports, excursions, festivals, etc. The report shows that 2 rooms were added to complete one of the main buildings. Another dining hall and a few petty roads round the building have also been constructed.

The total receipts in the *General Fund* including last year's balance amounted to Rs. 16,018-15-11 and the expenditure to Rs. 15,509-8-9. The total receipts in the *Building Fund* including last year's balance were Rs. 5,599-0-9 and the expenditure came to Rs. 5,416-6-0.

The urgent and immediate needs of the institution are: (1) A segregation ward, (2) A dormitory, and (8) Some up-to-date educational equipments. Funds are necessary. A sum of Rs. 20,000/- is required for the above needs. All help may be sent to the *Secretary, R. K. Mission Vidyapith, Deoghar, Bihar.*





Swami Brahmananda

# Prabuddha Bharata

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

## DISCOURSES ON JNANA YOGA

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Thought is all important, for “what we think we become.” There was once a Sannyâsin, a holy man, who sat under a tree and taught the people. He drank milk and ate only fruit, and made endless “prânâyâmas,” and felt himself to be very holy. In the same village lived an evil woman. Every day the Sannyâsin went and warned her that her wickedness would lead her to hell. The poor woman, unable to change her method of life which was her only means of livelihood, was still much moved by the terrible future depicted by the Sannyâsin. She wept and prayed to the Lord, begging Him to forgive her because she could not help herself. By and by both the holy man and the evil woman died. The angels came and bore her to heaven, while the demons claimed the soul of the Sannyâsin. “Why is this !” he exclaimed, “have I not lived a most holy life, and preached holiness to everybody ? Why should I be taken to hell while this wicked woman is taken to heaven ?” “Because,” answered the demons, “while she was forced to commit unholy acts, her mind was always fixed on the Lord and she sought deliverance, which has now come to her.

But you, on the contrary, while you performed only holy acts, had your mind always fixed on the wickedness of others. You saw only sin, and thought only of sin, so now you have to go to that place where only sin is.” The moral of the story is obvious : the outer life avails little. The heart must be pure and the pure heart sees only good, never evil. We should never try to be guardians of mankind, or to stand on a pedestal as saints reforming sinners. Let us rather purify ourselves, and the result must be that in so doing we shall help others.

Physics is bounded on both sides by metaphysics. So it is with reason, —it starts from non-reason and ends with non-reason. If we push inquiry far enough in the world of perception, we must reach a plane beyond perception. Reason is really stored up and classified perception, preserved by memory. We can never imagine or reason beyond our sense-perceptions. Nothing beyond reason can be an object of sense-knowledge. We feel the limited character of reason, yet it does bring us to a plane where we get a glimpse of something beyond. The question then arises : “Has man an in-



strument that transcends reason?" It is very probable that in man there is a power to reach beyond reason, in fact the saints in all ages assert the existence of this power in themselves. But it is impossible in the very nature of things to translate spiritual ideas and perceptions into the language of reason, and these same saints have each and all declared their inability to make known their spiritual experiences. Language can, of course, supply no words for them, so that it can only be asserted that these are actual experiences and can be had by all. Only in that way can they become known, but they can never be described. Religion is the science which learns the transcendental in nature through the transcendental in man. We know as yet but little of man, consequently but little of the universe. When we know more of man, we shall probably know more of the universe. Man is the epitome of all things and all knowledge is in him. Only for that infinitesimal portion of the universe, which comes into sense-perception, are we able to find a reason, never can we give the reason for any fundamental principle. Giving a reason for a thing is simply to classify it and put it in a pigeon-hole of the mind. When we meet a new fact, we at once strive to put it in some existing category and the attempt to do this is to reason. When we succeed in placing the fact, it gives a certain amount of satisfaction, but we can never go beyond the physical plane in this classification. That man can transcend the limits of the senses, is the emphatic testimony of all past ages. The Upanishads told 5,000 years ago that the realization of God could never be had through the senses. So far, modern agnosticism agrees, but the Vedas go further than the negative side and assert in the plainest terms that man can and does transcend this sense-bound, frozen universe. He can as it were find a hole in the ice, through which he can pass and reach the whole ocean of life. Only by so transcending the world of sense, can

he reach his true self, and realize what he really is.

Jnâna is never sense-knowledge. We cannot *know* Brahman, but we *are* Brahman, the whole of It, not a piece. The unextended never can be divided. The apparent variety is but the reflection seen in time and space, as we see the sun reflected in a million dew-drops, though we know that the sun itself is one and not many. In Jnâna we have to lose sight of the variety and see only the Unity. Here there is no subject, no object, no knowing, no thou or he or I, only the one, absolute Unity. We *are* this all the time; once free, ever free. Man is *not* bound by the law of causation. Pain and misery are not in man, they are but as the passing cloud throwing its shadow over the sun, but the cloud passes, the sun is unchanged, and so it is with man. He is not born, he does not die, he is not in time and space. These ideas are mere reflections of the mind, but we mistake them for the reality and so lose sight of the glorious truth they obscure. Time is but the method of our thinking, but we are the eternally present tense. Good and evil have existence only in relation to us. One cannot be had without the other, because neither has meaning or existence apart from the other. As long as we recognize duality, or separate God and man, so long we must see good *and* evil. Only by going to the centre, by unifying ourselves with God, can we escape the delusions of the senses. When we let go the eternal fever of desire, the endless thirst that gives us no rest, when we have forever quenched desire, we shall escape both good and evil, because we shall have transcended both. The satisfaction of desire only increases it, as oil poured on fire but makes it burn more fiercely. The farther from the centre, the faster goes the wheel, the less the rest. Draw near the centre, check desire, stamp it out, let the false self go, then our vision will clear and we shall see God. Only through renunciation of this life and of all life to come (heaven), can

we reach the point where we stand firmly on the true Self. While we hope for anything, desire still rules us. Be for one moment really hopeless and the mist will clear. For what to hope when one is the all of existence? The secret

of Jñāna is to give up all and be sufficient unto ourselves. Say "not", and you become "not"; say "is", and you become "is". Worship the Self within, naught else exists, all that blinds us is Mâyâ—delusion.

## A BRINJAL-SELLER APPRAISES A DIAMOND

BY THE EDITOR

V

Mr. Ghosh complains that Sri Ramakrishna did not truly understand the significance of Brahmo worship (*Arâdhanâ*). It may be that he did not know the fine distinctions that Brahmos make between *Arâdhanâ*, *Dhyâna*, Prayer, etc., as parts of their spiritual exercise. But he was not concerned with these distinctions. He noted the mental attitude of the Brahmo devotees when they spoke of God's glories, and he found that such recounting of God's glories kept their mind far away from true devotion to Him. Therefore he asked them to desist from it. Anyone can understand that his exhortations in this respect were not to the worldly-minded among the Brahmos, those who had no earnestness for God-realisation, but to those whom he found devout. He thought that if one dwelt so much on God's creation, his mind would be too externalised. One must think of God Himself and not of His doings. Mr. Ghosh accuses Sri Ramakrishna of self-contradiction in this. He quotes passages from the *Gospel*, in which Sri Ramakrishna himself says that he sings the name and praise of God and advises others to do so; and he adds: "So he had no valid reasons for condemning *Brahma Aradhana* which also according to him, meant 'singing God's praise.'" Emphatically it did not mean the same thing. Here Mr. Ghosh misleads himself and his readers. Singing God's praise did not, according to Sri Ramakrishna, mean that one should catalogue all the big things God has done,—the sun, moon, stars, etc., but

dwelling on His attributes, His infiniteness, eternity, mercy, love, etc., especially the latter attributes, which constitute His *Mâdhurya*, sweetness. There are ample evidences that Mr. Ghosh has taken great pains to compare the English version with the original Bengali edition of the *Gospel*. He has quoted Ramakrishna as singing God's name and praise and advising it to others. He has quoted from the English version. Did it not occur to him to seek the original of the phrase? If he had done so, he would have found that the original is: *Nâma-guna-gâna* or *kirtana*, which is quite different from the Brahmos' retailing of God's works which are God's *Aishvarya*. In page 43, *Gospel*, Vol. II (1st edition) we find Sri Ramakrishna saying to Pandit Sivanath Sastri: "So I say, a man seeks the *person* whom he delights in; what is the use of knowing his whereabouts or the number of his houses, gardens and his servants? When I see Narendra, I forget everything else: never have I even unwittingly asked him where he lived, or who was his parent or how many brothers he had. *Be immersed in the sweetness of His bliss! Infinite is His creation and infinite His glory! What is the use of our knowing all these?*" [Mr. Ghosh also has quoted from the same page. But how is it that he omits these significant sentences italicised by us?] There is a world of difference between God's *Mâdhurya* and *Aishvarya*. Sri Ramakrishna said again and again that the thought of God's *Aishvarya* keeps the devotee's mind away from God, it makes it outgoing, and one finds it difficult to love Him.

What Sri Ramakrishna wanted was that Brahmos should dwell on God's *Mādhurya* and not His *Aishvarya*. When he prescribed the singing of God's *guna* he meant His *Mādhurya*. In replying to Swami Nikhilananda's rejoinder in the April *Modern Review*, Mr. Ghosh says: "Attributes and their manifestations are concomitants. We know attributes through their manifestations." Here he avoids the main point. We want to know God and love Him and not His attributes. We dwell on the attributes in order to know Him. But if we have also to dwell on the manifestations of the attributes, we recede one step further from God. And that is what is objected to by Sri Ramakrishna. Does Mr. Ghosh maintain that we cannot think of God through His essential attributes without dwelling on the manifestations of the attributes also? It is indeed psychologically impossible to perceive the concrete world and God at the same time. And he himself says in another place: "But in higher stages the description and analysis of an attribute are not necessary. The mentioning of that attribute is enough, and you need not mention that attribute more than once; no repetition is necessary. Utter an attribute, say the word *Satyam* and the whole soul of the devotee will be aroused. He will feel His presence and he will feel himself united with Him." Mr. Ghosh very facetiously observes that the Brahmos do not make any distinction between the Garden and the Lord of the Garden. It may be so, but only immature minds would consider the obliteration of this distinction possible for the average Brahmo for whom also the *Arādhana* is meant. And what is the way to realising God in His creation? To quote the famous logical argument which Mr. Ghosh produced to refute the validity of Sri Ramakrishna's God-visions, one cannot know that A is B, until one has known A first and seen it to become transformed into B. Yes, one must first learn to love God with his whole heart and soul, as He is in Him-

self. Only then would one see Him in His creation. The mind must be purged of its present distorted vision of reality. Only then the true vision of the creation as Divinity would be possible.

Mr. Ghosh is nothing if not ingenious. He emphasizes Sri Ramakrishna's words *gardener* and *garden*. He takes them in their literal sense and argues hard to prove that a gardener cannot exist without a garden, and therefore one must think of the garden also, if he is to think of the gardener. Good logic. But Sri Ramakrishna was not speaking these things to logicians and in a logical mood. His meaning was clear and simple: Yes, God has created the universe; but forget the universe, and think of Him alone. What he wanted is that Brahmos should think of God and not of His creation. But Mr. Ghosh's logic prevents him from understanding this simple meaning. He cannot say that God cannot be thought of without thinking of His creation at the same time. For as we have seen, he himself implies that one can contemplate on God without thinking of His creation and he considers it a higher form of spiritual practice.

We cannot forego the pleasure of quoting here a fine reasoning of Mr. Ghosh: "The gardener without the garden and the garden without the gardener—both are meaningless abstractions. One cannot exist without the other. Many will impatiently ask—would then God be extinct, if there were no world? The answer is—There will still remain God; . . . There will still be an entity, but . . . it is an empty entity." What beautiful reasoning! Entity, but 'empty' entity, as if emptiness can constitute an entity! And that empty entity, mind you, is no less than God—"There will still remain God"! What kind of God is that which is an empty entity? Evidently Mr. Ghosh thinks that when God is deprived of His creation, He becomes like a perforated balloon, shrunken to nothingness. It is such mentality of

the Brahmos, which considers the creation as the essence of God, as was disapproved by Sri Ramakrishna. Such mental attitude could not produce also right *Dhyāna*. One may be interested to know what Sri Ramakrishna thought of the *Dhyāna* of the average Brahmos. He said: "The leader said: 'Let us commune with Him.' I thought: 'They will now go into the inner world and stay a long time.' Hardly had a few minutes passed when they all opened their eyes. I was astonished. Can anyone find Him after so slight a meditation? After it was all over, when we were alone, I spoke to Keshab about it: 'I watched all your congregation communing with their eyes shut. Do you know what it reminds me of? Sometimes at Dakshineswar I have seen under the trees a flock of monkeys sitting stiff and looking the very picture of innocence. . . . They were thinking and planning their campaign of robbing certain gardens of fruits, roots, and other edibles . . . in a few moments. The communing that your followers did with God to-day is not more serious.'" (See Swami Saradananda: *Divyabhāva*, 1st edition, p. 13).

Sri Ramakrishna could certainly judge what was genuine meditation.

## VI

Mr. Ghosh says that "Paramahansa's divine worship consisted primarily in (1) Nama-japa, repeating God's name and (2) singing His praise." It is a most incorrect and ignorant characterisation of Sri Ramakrishna's divine worship. *Nāma-japa* and *Kirtana* were only two of the many and various ways in which he performed divine worship, and Mr. Ghosh evidently knows that, for he has referred in course of his article to *Līlāprasānga*, *Sādhakabhāva*, in which all his *Sādhana*s are described. In his after life also, when all his *Sādhana*s had been over, he did not dwell on *Nāma-japa* and *Kirtana* alone. He lived in varied moods, enjoying Divine Communion in various ways, and instructed his disciples also variously.

Anyhow it is interesting to note what Mr. Ghosh has to say of Sri Ramakrishna's *Nāma-japa*. He begins with the misleading and careless statement: "He accepted the popular view of the worth of *Nāma* (name) . . . The popular belief is that the 'nama' of God has some inherent inscrutable mystic power." The opposite, however, is the fact. A Ramakrishna discovers by his own experience the worth of God's name and people believe in his affirmation. Sri Ramakrishna had not to accept a popular belief. The sages found the mysterious powers of God's names by their *Sādhana* and communicated the truth to the people who therefore believed. We specially take note of this, for we want to emphasise that in spite of Mr. Ghosh and his modernism, the proof of these things lies in the experience of sages and not in the syllogisms of logicians arguing from imperfect premises.

Mr. Ghosh says in the April *Modern Review* that Sri Ramakrishna believed in the "magical and mystical power of particular names." By this Mr. Ghosh implies that Sri Ramakrishna thought that simply a few repetitions of God's names could produce some magical and mystical effect. This is, to say the least, an ignorant description of Sri Ramakrishna's attitude. Sri Ramakrishna never believed in the magical effect of *Nāma-japa*, though he believed in its mystical effect under certain conditions. Mr. Ghosh has quoted from pages 138, 185 and 196 of the 2nd Vol. of *Gospel* to indicate Sri Ramakrishna's attitude towards *Nāma-japa*. He quotes some casual utterances, but omits the more serious ones. He ought to have reproduced the passage in pages 105—107 (1st edition), 2nd Vol., which is decidedly more representative:

"Sri R: Well, what do you say,-- what is the way?"

"Goswami: His Name alone will do. The Holy Name is very effective in Kali Yuga.

"Sri R: Yes, no doubt the Holy Name is very effective; but is it suffi-

cient without love?—The soul must hunger for God! Or what will it avail that I repeat His name, if my mind is attached to *Kâmini-Kâñchana*? . . .

“*Goswami*: What about Ajamil then? Ajamil was a great sinner, there was no sin he did not commit. But only because in his dying hour, he called his son by his name of ‘Nârâyana’, he was saved.

“*Sri R*: Perchance he had accumulated great merit in his previous birth. Besides it is said that he practised penance afterwards.

“‘You may also explain it thus: Those were Ajamil’s last moments. An elephant besmears his body with dust and mud immediately after his bath. But the elephant remains clean, if after bath, his keeper puts him into the stall at once!

“‘Man becomes purged of his sins for once by uttering His name. But the next moment he takes to various sinful acts,—he has not enough strength of mind to vow that he will never more commit any sin. . . .

“‘Therefore take always the name of the Lord, but pray to Him at the same time that you may earn love for him, and that your attachment for money, fame and physical comforts that are but transient, may grow less and less!’”

This passage fully represents Sri Ramakrishna’s view of *Nâma-japa*. He believed that for the *Nâma-japa* to be effective, there must be earnestness and eagerness for God-realisation, and one must be rid of worldly attachments. Without these it will not produce any effective result. Similar other passages can be cited from the *Gospel* in confirmation. Sri Ramakrishna did not maintain that a mechanical repetition will grant God-vision.

But he certainly held that the repetition would produce some result. It is axiomatic that every action has some effect. The repetition of God’s name cannot be without it. Once two devotees were conversing among themselves about the effect of repeating

God’s name. One maintained that it was not always effective. But the other said that it was like the seed of a banyan tree, it contained immense potentialities; and though it might not sprout at once, it would do so one day. On hearing them Sri Ramakrishna said: “Yes, it becomes effective after a long time.” (*Kathâmrta*, Vol. III, second edition, page 66). Here no *magical* effect of unconscious or mechanical repetition of God’s name is maintained. In the conversation we have quoted above, we find Sri Ramakrishna saying that the utterance of the name of God purifies a man, but that his bad deeds overwhelm him again. Here also no *magical* effect of Divine names is suggested. As will be apparent from the conversation quoted, Sri Ramakrishna did not endorse the main point of that story of Ajamil, that even an unconscious taking of God’s name can grant salvation. But he certainly held that a conscious repetition of God’s name has a sanctifying effect, however transient. The reason is not far to seek. Even a fleeting remembrance of God is purifying. With the man of God, however, the repetition of God’s name may certainly show results which are apparently magical. A single utterance of the name of God can transport him to God-consciousness. Our critic also admits that a single utterance of a significant name of God may produce such a result. This is not however to say that God’s name has no mystical effect. What is ‘mystical’? That which is too deep for the normal mind, which is not comprehended by the ordinary reason. Certainly the names of God have relations and implications, which are too deep to be comprehended by the normal and rational mind.

Mr. Ghosh says: “To modernists the name has no intrinsic worth. It has no mystic power. It is simply a sound. Its value is the value of a symbol or a logical concept.” Mr. Ghosh says that the verbal symbols are man-made creations. That means that whatever words have passed as names of God, must re-

mind one of God alone when one repeats them. So it is not inevitable that new names should be coined for *Nāma-japa*. A name etymologically may mean anything. But if through long usage, it suggests the idea of God, it is enough for our purpose. Therefore, whether one believed in the mystic power of God's name or not, one derives the same result from its repetition as any modernist by repeating newly-coined names. But Mr. Ghosh soon shifts his ground: He began with the *symbolical* significance of name, now he upholds the *etymological* significance. He says: "If you wish to be immersed in Divine Love, the name must signify that God is Love. The terrific aspect of God cannot inspire the emotion of Love." Evidently he here means such names as Kali etc. If, however, it is said that the repetitions of such names produced God-consciousness, he says: "Some mistake the vacuity of mind for immersion in and union with God. Such vacuity may be induced by thinking on any sound or symbol. Such condition may be compared to artificial sleep and is present even in non-theistic Yoga or Samadhi. It is non-spiritual." A more responsible man would have hesitated to write the above. Not only our critic knows all the secrets of the realisation of Kali or similar Divine aspects, but he also knows the secrets of Yogic achievements, and confidently declares that these are all induced states of mental vacuity, nothing else. His ignorance is his strongest proof. Where is the proof that the terrific aspect of God cannot inspire the emotion of Love? It may be that it cannot inspire love in him or his modernist friends. But what proof has he to deny the testimony of hundreds and thousands of *Shākta Sādhakas* and *Siddhas*? A Ramprasad or a Ramakrishna does not prove to him the falsity of his idea; on the contrary, his ignorance proves a Ramprasad or Ramakrishna to be false! Such strange reasoning may be enough to delude oneself, but not to ascertain truth.

He holds up before us the big stick of 'modernism' and tells us to disown belief in the mystic power of name. What if many saints and sages have declared otherwise? We would like to know of Mr. Ghosh who are those whom he calls modernists. Are all modern thinkers modernists? Are they all agreed on the conventional, man-made origin of language? Fortunately for India even all Western thinkers do not consider that words are mere conventional symbols of ideas. These were not deliberately coined by men. The relation of word and meaning goes much deeper than the conscious mind of man. It is conceivable, therefore, that the effect of the repetition of certain words would be much deeper than warranted by superficial logic. Logic is not enough to estimate the psychological effect of anything, much less of a word-symbol. Only deep introspection and, more than that, personal experience can reveal the true effect of *Nāma-japa*. Let Mr. Ghosh practise *Nāma-japa* in the orthodox style for a sufficient time, having fulfilled the conditions precedent, he will know. It is through mystical experience that we can know what effects are produced by what words. An arbitrary choice will not do. Mr. Ghosh is expected to know the Indian doctrine of *Nāda-Brahman*, of *Sphota*. He must refute it properly before he can scout the 'popular' idea of the mystical effect of *Nāma-japa*. Sri Ramakrishna's attitude was quite in accordance with this doctrine confirmed by his own experience.

Mr. Ghosh has good words to say about Sri Ramakrishna's catholicism. He asks all to be tolerant and catholic. But the following quotation is illustrative of his peculiar catholicism: "Many will ask—Are we to tolerate idol-worship? Yes, every form of worship is to be tolerated. Another point may be considered here. What is called 'idol-worship' is not the worship of an idol. No one can psychologically worship an idol as idol, a stone as stone. What they worship is a spirit or a power which

is believed to reside in or to come, on a particular occasion, to a particular object. We know, their belief is wrong, but that does not make them sinful. The days of Imperialistic Religions are gone. There now arises no question of honouring or insulting God. The idea of dishonouring God by idol worship is now antiquated and foolish. So even the so-called idol-worship is to be tolerated."

## VII

Such is the learned writer's estimation of Sri Ramakrishna. He was deluded to worship Kali,—fortunately he was afterwards disillusioned; his *Samādhi* was not really union with God, for *Samādhi* is nothing but concentration of mind; his visions were really nothing Divine, but only projections of his own thoughts,—there was no truth in them; he was only a *Bhakta*; his idea of *Nāma-japa* was wrong, in fact his repetition of the name of Kali did not produce any spiritual condition but only a vacuity of mind; and his conception of Brahmo worship was wrong. This is the character of Sri Ramakrishna that has emerged from the clever review of Mr. Ghosh. We do not wonder at the result. What amazes us is how he could preface his criticism with such remarks as these about Sri Ramakrishna: "He was a 'god-intoxicated' man. He was an incarnation of the spirit of Chaitanya. His ecstatic devotion (*Bhakti*) was alone sufficient to attract devotees to his side or to his feet." How does he reconcile his critical estimate with these prefatory remarks? A God-intoxicated man certainly cannot be deluded about his own spiritual practices. He cannot be subject to hallucinations and consider them to be spiritual visions. He was deluded in almost everything, yet he was God-intoxicated! Perhaps one of the strange conclusions of 'modernism' is that it considers a man spiritually deluded and yet God-intoxicated! We cannot reconcile these two aspects. We think that to be so exalted and God-intoxicated as Sri Ramakrishna

was even in our critic's view, one must be above hallucination and seeing visions as a result of his attachment for earthly companions; he cannot be a neurotic; he must be full of truth; his visions must be true; his enunciation of spiritual truths must be correct; he must radiate a great spiritual power; he must be above all fear; his mind must be absolutely pure and free from error. Mr. Ghosh says: "It is the personality of the man (and not his philosophy or theology) that attracts us." Such a distinction is unreal in the case of a man like Sri Ramakrishna, for the theological and philosophical 'defects' that the critic has discovered in Sri Ramakrishna, were vital to his spiritual existence. There may be theological views which are merely views and not vital to our spiritual life. One may be mistaken in them. But a Sri Ramakrishna is nothing if his fundamental theological or philosophical views do not tally with or come out of his own intimate experience. An ordinary man may hold a theological view which might have nothing to do with his life, but not Sri Ramakrishna. Either he is not spiritual enough, or his views must be the outcome of his own experience.

The fact is, persons like the present critic have always found it hard to accept Sri Ramakrishna. They cannot ignore him. They cannot accept him also, because their prejudice and ignorance stand between, and because they have not the courage to accept the challenge of his life. The attempt of Mr. Ghosh is only an expression of that uncomfortable attitude. He is not content with merely denuding Sri Ramakrishna of his true character and greatness, he also hits at his disciples. He categorically states that "he made no disciples, yet many devotees accepted him as their *Guru*." He quotes a few passages from the *Gospel* to substantiate his view. But if he had not been blinded by preconceived notions, he would have found ample proof in the *Gospel* itself to the contrary. Mr. Ghosh totally mis-

understands the attitude of Sri Ramakrishna in this respect. He did not make disciples, yet he made disciples. Certainly he did not make any one a disciple in the way an ordinary *Guru* does,—with a set purpose and in the egoistic spirit. He always repudiated this egoistic spirit. Yet whoever has read his life, knows that for some persons he felt a deep attraction and that he instructed them in every way to realise God. After his *Sâdhanâ* was over, he had a vision of the disciples who would come to him, and every evening he used to cry for them to come to him; and in course of time they actually came. Mr. Ghosh may say that though he helped them spiritually, they were not recognised by him as his disciples. We have already said that his was not the outlook of an ordinary *Guru*; on the other hand, he used to look upon them as the embodiments of God Himself. But what is the sign of the relationship of *Guru* and disciple? The *Guru* must give the disciples initiation and should feel himself responsible for the spiritual welfare of the disciples, he must even take upon himself the burden of their sins, and the disciples should receive a power, or *mantram* or instructions, each or all of them, from the *Guru*. Did Sri Ramakrishna initiate anyone? *He did*. The initiation with Sri Ramakrishna often took different forms—awakening of spiritual consciousness by touch, look, or word, writing sacred words on the tongues of disciples, or imparting a sacred *mantram* by word of mouth. All these various processes are recognised in the *Tantras* as *Deekshâ* or initiation. Sri Ramakrishna felt himself responsible for the disciples' welfare; he always looked after their spiritual condition, removed the obstructions on their way, and even took their *Karma* upon himself. He also consciously and openly recognised himself as their *Guru*. Once one of his disciples, while coming in a row-boat from Calcutta to Dakshineswar, heard some of his fellow-passengers reviling Sri Ramakrishna. He,

however, calmly bore the insult to his Master. When Sri Ramakrishna learnt this, he rebuked him and said: "It is enjoined in the *Shâstras* that if any one abuses your *Guru*, you must either cut off his head or leave the place. And you did not even protest against the slander!" (*Lilâprasanga*, *Divyabhâva*, Chapter VII). The disciples also felt that he was their *Guru*. What more proof is needed to know that Sri Ramakrishna considered himself as their *Guru*? Mr. Ghosh may have some other idea of *Guruship*. But it must be a peculiar one. A very cogent reply to Mr. Ghosh's doubts on this point will be found in the third chapter of Swami Saradananda's *Gurubhâva*, 1st volume. Space forbids us to reproduce it here.

## VIII

Sri Ramakrishna not only initiated the disciples but he actually granted salvation. Mr. Ghosh says: "His followers tried to convince themselves as well as others that he was a special incarnation of God. But he repudiated the idea," and he quotes from the *Gospel* to support his statement. But this also, as usual with Mr. Ghosh, is an one-sided quotation. In the *Gospel* itself there are many passages in which Sri Ramakrishna himself declares his Avatarahood. We ourselves translated a very significant portion in the last November number of *Prabuddha Bharata*. It is quite true that he did not proclaim himself as an Avatar from the house-top. But to his select disciples, he did proclaim himself as such. We give a few instances: Narendranath (Swami Vivekananda), though the most intimate disciple of the Master, would not accept him as an incarnation of God. A free thinker and a rationalist, he did not understand how God could possibly appear as a human being. A couple of days before Sri Ramakrishna's final *Samâdhi*, he was alone with the Master standing by his bedside. Then the disciple thought:



"Many people accept him as an incarnation of God. He also has given enough indication of that. But I never believed him to be so. I will accept him as such, only if now, in the midst of his death agony, he declares to me that he is an Incarnation." It was only a passing thought in his mind. But instantly came the unmistakable reply through the dying lips: "Well, Naren, He who was born in previous ages as Rama and Krishna, is now before you as Ramakrishna,—though not from your Vedantic standpoint." Again on another occasion he said to M.: "There are no outsiders here. One day Harish was with me and I saw *Sachchidânanda* come out from this body. It said: 'I am born as an Incarnation from time to time.'" He added later on: ". . . I find this time there is the fullest manifestation, though with an excess of *Sattva*." Another day he said to Narendra and others: "I see everything is from this (his body)." Then he asked Narendra to explain its meaning. Narendra said: "All created things have emanated from you." Sri Ramakrishna with evident satisfaction said to Rakhal: "Just see!" On still another occasion he said to a devotee: "It is enough for these boys who have come here if they know two things. They need not undergo much spiritual austerities. First, they should know who I am, and secondly, who they are. Many of the boys belong to the inner circle." This is enough confession from him to convince even the sceptics that he is an incarnation of God. Once it was reported to him that Girish Babu, the great dramatist, and Ram Babu, another disciple, were preaching him as an *Avatâra*; whereupon he retorted: "What do they know about Avatara-hood? One of them is a dramatist and the other a chemist. Long ago, men of vast learning like Padmalochan, Narayan Shastri and others talked and talked of this body (*meaning himself*) being an *Avatâra* till I was sick of it." We would also request Mr. Ghosh to

peruse an article by Swami Saradananda (*How Sri Ramakrishna Tested His Disciples*) which appeared in March *Prabuddha Bharata*. Therein he will find that Sri Ramakrishna indeed asked many of his disciples to look upon him as their *Ista* (Chosen Deity). In the face of all these facts, to say that he never claimed to be an Incarnation, would be a deliberate misstatement.

Mr. Ghosh says: "'An Avatar is,' according to Ramakrishna, 'one who grants salvation.' But he never exercised nor claimed such a privilege or power. He would not accept the role of even a Guru. On the other hand, he was himself afraid of contamination and avoided sinners and the deformed." This is as false a statement as can be. He *did* grant salvation. Mr. Ghosh must acquaint himself with all the facts before he makes such daring statements. Sri Ramakrishna had the power to grant God-vision and release one from the bondage of *Karma*. Many disciples have left their testimonies to that effect. Let Mr. Ghosh read at least the autobiographical essays of Girish Ch. Ghosh. He would know how Sri Ramakrishna asked him to give him the 'power of attorney', and how he was saved. It is all wrong to say that he was *afraid* of contamination. Even the least trace of impurity was indeed painful to him. But he had no *fear*. For he deliberately purified many sinners by his holy touch, though he suffered in consequence. We shall cite a relevant incident here: "While staying at Shyampukur undergoing treatment for cancer, Sri Ramakrishna once saw his subtle body coming out of himself and roaming about the room. 'Its back was full of ulcers,' he said afterwards to us. 'I was wondering why it was so, when Mother showed me that the ulcers were caused by my taking upon myself the sins of others. People come with all their sins and touch me. Their plight excites my compassion and I cannot help taking those sins upon myself. This indeed is the origin of

this cancer. I have never committed any sin myself,—why should I suffer on my own account?’” (See *Guru-bhāva*, 1st Vol., 1st chapter). Once he cured a leper by touching him, and as a result suffered excruciating burning pain all over his body.

To-day Mr. Ghosh says that Sri Ramakrishna was afraid of contamination. But it is strange that in the early days Sri Ramakrishna’s very disregard of the fear of contamination was a charge brought against him by such veteran Brahmo leaders as Pratap Ch. Mozoomdar and Pandit Sivanath Sastri. Mr. Mozoomdar had written to Prof. Max Müller in order to acquaint him with another side of Sri Ramakrishna’s character, which was “not edifying.” To quote Swami Vivekananda: “Again another charge put forward is, that ‘he did not show sufficient moral abhorrence of prostitutes’,—to them, the Professor’s rejoinder is very, very sweet indeed; he says that, in this charge, Ramakrishna ‘does not stand quite alone among the founders of religion!’ Ah! How sweet are these words,—they remind one of the prostitute Ambapali, the object of Lord Buddha’s divine grace, and of the Samaritan woman, who won the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Says Pandit Sivanath Sastri in his *Men I Have Seen*. “During the last few years of the saint’s life, my visits became less frequent than they were before. Two causes contributed to produce that result. First, latterly, through his childlike simplicity he was drawn away by some of his new disciples, into encouraging by his visits and friendship, many objectionable characters such as the actors of the Indian theatres. I did not like to be associated with such men.”

What does Mr. Ghosh think now of Sri Ramakrishna’s fear of contamination and his avoidance of sinners?

## IX

Mr. Ghosh ends his review with a Note in which he points out a few dis-

crepancies between the original Bengali and the English translation of the *Gospel*. The discrepancies are all shown from the *Gospel*, Vol. I. Mr. Ghosh calls them deliberate additions and interpolations. This volume was prepared by the author, M., himself and was first published in 1907. The second volume of the *Gospel* first appeared in 1922. In the preparation of the first volume, the author’s attempt was to make it as representative of the teachings of the Master as possible. He thus transposed a few passages from one place to another. And in order to make explicit the ideas of Sri Ramakrishna he sometimes amplified a few passages. If he added any new sentences, that was to draw out the implications of preceding sentences. Mr. Ghosh complains of omissions of passages also. That was absolutely necessary. For certain expressions may pass in Bengali, but may not in English. Mr. Ghosh must admit this difficulty in the translation from one language to another. This is the real explanation of the additions and omissions that we find in the English translation. But we admit that some of these could be done in a more technically correct form. We, however, do not see how he can characterise them in the way he has done. He says: “The materials of the English version have been drawn from the Bengali edition. But unfortunately there are omissions, additions and alterations in the English edition. These seem to be an afterthought. When there is found even one purposive interpolation, the genuineness of the writings of the author and his scrupulosity regarding historical accuracy become doubtful. In fact the belief is current in many quarters that the Ramakrishna as depicted by ‘M’ (Babu Mahendranath Gupta) is not the real Ramakrishna but the Ramakrishna of ‘M’—a revised, modified, expurgated and magnified version of the real Ramakrishna.” Anyone with even a little common sense would have thought that if M.’s purpose were to present a revised view

of Sri Ramakrishna, he would have followed the same process in both the English and Bengali versions. But that M. has not done. His motive was not, therefore, to mislead people. Mr. Ghosh must prove dishonest intention on the part of the author before he can characterise M. as an interpolator. Mr. Ghosh says: "In fact the belief is current in many quarters that the Ramakrishna as depicted by 'M' is not the real Ramakrishna but the Ramakrishna of 'M'." We do not see anything wrong in this. Even of an ordinary man, various persons form various opinions. It is no wonder that of Sri Ramakrishna, the different disciples should form different ideas. But we strongly repudiate what Mr. Ghosh adds: "a revised, modified, expurgated and magnified version of the real Ramakrishna." "The belief is current in many quarters," he says. What are those quarters? The quarters from which the reviewer comes? To ascribe deliberate dishonesty to a gentleman without sufficient proof is, to say the least, ungentlemanly. Mr. Ghosh says that because there have been additions and alterations (very trifling, and adding nothing new) in a volume of translation, therefore his Bengali version is also to be doubted. But how does Mr. Ghosh know that, except those trifling changes, everything is not literally correct? To accuse, mere doubt is not enough. *Positive* proof is necessary. Mr. Ghosh talks of a real Ramakrishna. What is that? That which Mr. Ghosh and his friends think of him? Well, when Prof. Max Müller wrote his article (*A Real Mahatman*) on Sri Ramakrishna in *The Nineteenth Century*, a certain section of Bengalees raised a hue and cry. They eagerly wrote to the Professor to acquaint him with a "not edifying side" of Sri Ramakrishna. [The same game seems to be afoot again.] They did their best at that time to portray the "real" Ramakrishna for his benefit. The world can read the indictment and the Professor's reply to it in his book, *Ramakrishna* :

*His Life and Sayings*. Can Mr. Ghosh discover a more 'real' Ramakrishna? We have, on the other hand, the testimony of Swami Vivekananda and several other disciples that the presentation of Sri Ramakrishna in the *Kathâmrta* is quite correct. Swami Vivekananda wrote to M. : "The move is quite original, and never was the life of a great teacher brought before the public untarnished by the writer's mind as you are doing. . . . I cannot express in adequate terms how I have enjoyed them. I am really in a transport when I read them."

We have attempted in the foregoing pages to show the blunders Mr. Ghosh has made in forming conclusions about Sri Ramakrishna, and we have also produced sufficient authorities to substantiate our points. We hope Mr. Ghosh will now see how flimsy was the basis on which he reared up his imaginary structure. But perhaps we should not hope so. For has not Mr. Ghosh shown in his reply to Swami Nikhilananda's rejoinder how he treats everything that does not suit his purpose? The disciples of Sri Ramakrishna who lived for years intimately with him, are "unauthentic." *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* or the *Kathâmrta* are unauthentic. The *Lilâprasanga* also, we dare say, he will call unauthentic. The reason perhaps is that the disciples were *disciples* of Sri Ramakrishna. You cannot be relied upon as regards a person whom you love and revere. Hate him or be indifferent to him—then you are reliable, e.g., the celebrated witness of Mr. Ghosh,—Trailokya Nath Deb.

In conclusion, we shall present Mr. Ghosh with a little poem by an unknown *Bâul* :

"A goldsmith, methinks, has come into the flower garden.

He would appraise the lotus, forsooth,  
By rubbing it on his touchstone."

Mr. Ghosh is a great scholar. But we believe he also can learn a real lesson from this song of an unlettered villager. Intellectualism may be good

within certain limits. But in things spiritual, book-learning avails little. One must have wide sympathies, spiritual vision, purity of mind and love of God. Without these, intellectualism is a snare and a danger.

(Concluded)

## THE DIARY OF A DISCIPLE

OCTOBER 12, 1919.

It was 4 p.m. Swami Turiyananda was sitting in his room in the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service at Benares. A few *Sannyâsins* and lay devotees were present. A conversation was going on on Sir John Woodroffe's *Is India Civilised?*, the second edition of which had come out much enlarged. [When the first edition appeared, many Europeans criticised his views. Sir John answered them strongly in the second edition.]

*Disciple* : "A copy of the Annual Report of the Dacca Ramakrishna Mission was sent to him with a request to provide the Institution with a set of his works. He not only presented all his books published up to the time, but also ordered his publishers to supply his future works as soon as they appeared in print. He has deep regard for India; he can thus at once know who are really working for her."

*A* : "He is a Justice of the Calcutta High Court. He has to try cases, write judgments and perform other strenuous works connected with his office. Over and above, he has written so many books. How can he make time?"

*Disciple* : "There is an advantage in writing work. You can make steady progress. If you write one hour every day, you will find at the end of the year that much has been written. But with spiritual practice the case is different. You may practise meditation and *japa* two or three hours a day and continue it for ten long years, yet you won't notice any appreciable progress. It is as though you are just where you were in the beginning."

*Swami* : "What do you say? Who says that spiritual practice produces no

effect? Surely it does. There is not a shade of doubt about it.

"People of the world give you wages, if you work for them. Is God so unkind that He will not requite the works done for Him? But you must work in the right spirit. Working haphazardly will not do. A mad man lived near a distillery. Every noon he would go where the rejected earthen pots used in distilling wine were thrown and break them one by one with a stick, and perspiring heavily he would cry out : 'Oh, I can work no more.' He would then take a little rest and begin again !

"It will not do if you toil this way. You may irrigate the field all day, but it would be all in vain, if there is a hole in the field. When you will go to the field in the evening, you will find that not a drop of water has remained in the field, all has run out through the hole. Attachment to sense-objects is the hole."

*Disciple* : "What shall we do, *Mahârâj*, if we cannot find out the hole? It all depends on the grace of the *Guru*. Sri Ramakrishna said : 'If anyone intends to make a pilgrimage to the temple of Jagannath and travels in a wrong direction through mistake, someone will surely point him out the right direction sooner or later.' A seeker of God may adopt a wrong course, but it is certain that his object is the attainment of God. Why then should his labours prove fruitless?"

*Swami* : "No, they would not, if he really be in quest of God. Such a man is sure to receive a glimpse of His grace some day. 'If anyone advances one step towards God, He comes nearer by a hundred steps.' This is no idle talk. Whoever has made even a little effort

to earn His grace has realised this. (*Turning to A.*) What do you say?"

A: "Yes, Sir. Certainly he does."

Swami: "Truthfulness, obedience and looking upon all women as mother, if these do not lead one to Hari, then Tulsi is responsible for him.' Few, alas, speak the truth. What is obedience? It is full resignation. And one must look upon another's wife as one's mother. Whoever will have these, will reach God; Tulsi stands security for him.

"He who constantly steals others' property may perform great charities, still he does none. He who always depends on others, may live long, yet he lives not. He who always slanders others may repeat the holy name, yet he does it not,' so said Kavi.

"What will it avail if one makes charity with money stolen from others? To live long on the charity of others is as good as death. It is useless for a slanderer to repeat the name of God. This is why Jesus said: 'Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.'"

Disciple: "It is pleasant to hear all these, *Mahârâj*. But it costs one's life to carry them out. Theoretically it is easy to understand them, but to practise them is extremely difficult."

Swami: "But even an intellectual grasp is not nothing. It is possible only in this country. A great many souls were born here, who realised *Brahman* and the influence of their experiences has entered into the very marrow of the country. That is how men and women, old and young, all can easily understand these truths."

A: "No other people has perhaps been able to realise the personal and the impersonal aspects of God at the same time?"

Swami: "No. Only the *Rishis* (seers) of this country realised the *Nirguna Brahman*. One Mussulman is

said to have attained the consciousness, 'I am Brahman, I am He'. But when he declared this, the Mollahs were much enraged with him. They being the descendants of Ali were the priests of the Muhammadans. They were all dualists. Once the Caliph's daughter fell dangerously ill. No physician could cure her. Then some one suggested that that saint should be called in. 'He possesses wonderful powers,' he said, 'surely he can cure her.' So he was called in. He said to the Caliph's daughter: 'In the name of God, I declare you cured. Therefore get up.' But the words produced no effect. Then he exclaimed: 'I say that you are recovered. Therefore get up.' And she was at once cured. The Caliph was highly pleased. But the Mollahs cried out: 'Did you see how he said he was more powerful than Allah?' He was therefore put on trial and flayed alive. In that terrible state he went from door to door begging for food. But all closed their doors against him. Only a butcher threw a bit of flesh to him and shut the door. Next he begged for fire to roast the meat, but was refused by all. Then he held it towards the sun and the sun in order to give more heat came lower down. So it is said that the sun is much nearer at Multan."

A *Brahmachâri*: "When did it happen?"

Swami: "About the fifteenth century."

*Brahmachâri*: "Jesus also said: 'I and my father are one.'"

Swami: "He answered very carefully in the court. 'Art thou the king of the Jews?' 'Thou sayst it,' he answered. The priests were all enraged with him because of his powers, for his influence affected their income, as people obeyed him implicitly. Jesus said: 'Come ye after me, and I will make you become fishers of men.' And at once Simon and his brother forsook their nets and followed him. One of his disciples came and said: 'Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.' But Jesus said to him:

'Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead'. When the priests saw that he was bringing about their ruin they sued him in the court. But the governor found no guilt in him. He was ready to release him. But the multi-

tudes insisted on his being sentenced to death, so he delivered him up to them to be crucified, saying: 'I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.' "

## PHASES OF IMMEDIATE EXPERIENCE

BY DR. MAHENDRANATH SIRCAR, M.A., PH.D.

*(Continued from the last issue)*

### REVELATION AND INTUITION

Revelation transcends the subjectivism of psychism as it puts us in relation to a super-mind and implies free reception of ideas and knowledge lying deep in the supra-sensuous reality. It is indeed an objective knowledge since it is not an expression of the finite mind. The finite consciousness becomes the recipient of such revelations in a high receptive concentration. Such revealed knowledge is indeed the highest that the finite can get, highest in value and greatest in accuracy; the latter, because it proceeds from a source which cannot deceive, the former because it is the inmost knowledge of existence received in a state of super-consciousness. Such revelation is to be distinguished from the sensuous intuition produced by the heightening of the lower mind, the sensibility. These are subjective experiences consequent on the fine activity of our sensuous nature and, therefore, should not be confounded with more objective receptions of the higher mind in revelation. Revelation is possible and within access when the supra-sensuous mind becomes active in us.

Revelation, unlike empiric intuition, has an objective source. And the knowledge is direct. But it is no directness of sensuous intuition. This directness gives it a superior claim to reason, for reason works out a system, revelation gives illumination.

The reference to an objective source heightens its value; at the same time it does not suffer because of this refer-

ence. Revelation has been, therefore, regarded as a source of knowledge superior to reason by its directness and infallibility and to empiric intuition by its objectivity. Directness, infallibility and objectivity mark out revelation as a sure source of knowledge.

Revelation is to be distinguished from transcendent intuition. Revelation is a possibility in concrete consciousness, intuition in transcendent. In revelation the super-mind is active, in intuition the super-mind has no play. Revelation is a process, intuition is no process and denies the conditions of concrete consciousness. Intuition is then no psychological process nor a faculty. It is supra-logical, supra-psychological; it is the summit of being.

Intuition is no process in time, revelation is a process in time. In one sense both of them are timeless, and the ardent souls speak of the timelessness of mysticism, because the truths of revelation are eternal and uniform, time has no influence upon them, and as such the mystics claim uniform perceptions which deny the wear and tear of time. But timelessness has two senses:

- (1) Uniform durability through time;
- (2) Transcendence of time.

The one does not deny an expression through time, the other denies it. The timelessness of revelation is of the first kind. Revelations are always of the same kind since they proceed not from the surface mentality, but from the source of all light and knowledge. Revelation cannot transcend the time

element in Isvara and is uniform because it manifests what obtains in the causal being of Isvara. The effectual order and the causal order are orders in time, the events in both the orders are temporal events. But the events in the effectual order are events which has a short history, whereas the events in the causal order has an eternal history. Revelation is an event in the effectual order, it is the expression of the causal in the effectual, and as such it is a short time event but its truth is enduring. The truth of revelation is of the causal order, the event of revelation is of the effectual order. The event dies, the truth lasts forever. The time-series in the effectual order has a past, a present and a future. The time-series in the causal order has no past or future. It is ever-present. The intuition of duration in the finite mind is different from the intuition of time in the infinite; in the finite mind duration has a history, a beginning and a setting; and the finite life is a series of such beginnings and settings. The empiric intuition of time is the intuition of duration, not in its continuous but in its successive flow, and the division of past, future and present is natural for the empiric intuition. It has not the capacity of receiving duration in its ever present continuity. The infinite only can perceive time in eternal continuity without the idea of succession. The soul of time is duration, but duration is not necessarily succession; the logical intellect cannot rise above the distinction of the present, the past and the future, and its understanding of time is necessarily defective; logically time is identified with succession but this is not true. The understanding of time is not possible, as Bergson has truly pointed out, by intellect or symbolic thinking. Its apprehension is more intuitive than intellectual, and the intuitive apprehension of time is an unceasing and continuous flow of duration without the intellectual grafting of the divisions of past, present and future. Time is Life.

The Indian thinkers draw a distinction between the Khanda and the Akhanda Kāla, the divided and the undivided time. The former one is the understanding of time through succession. The understanding of time as eternal duration is Isvara, the dynamic Divine. Revelation is the impress of the dynamic Divine upon the logical intellect, which reveals a timeless intuition as an event in time. Revelation is then strictly the footprint of the eternal upon the sands of time. It is the reflection through the camera of the intellect. Intuition is timelessness in its strict sense. It transcends even duration. Intuition is timeless expression. Revelation is expression in time. The former is static, the latter dynamic.

At this point divergence arises between commentators of Vedānta. Samkara regards intuition as a *jait accompli*, Ramanuja regards intuition as intuitive. In Samkara intuition transcends all distinctions and concreteness, in Ramanuja intuition is concrete; intuition intuites.

It appears then that Ramanuja has drawn no clear distinction between revelation and intuition, and to him the highest intuitions are revelations. And revelation is the highest source of knowledge. It is higher than Yoga, for Yoga is subjective penetration, revelation, objective reception.

But still it has a limitation of a reference, intuition has no such reference.

The fundamental difference between revelation and intuition as a psychological process and as a transcendent existence is often lost upon us and is the source of a confusion between the function and the fact of intuition.

This phase of intuition is a new element in Samkara's philosophy, which gives it a form or a shape fundamentally different from the logical bent. Samkara accepts the possibility of revelation. It is a theological attitude of consciousness. The theological attitude is possible in concrete consciousness or self-consciousness, but is not possible in the transcendent. The transcendent is

unique and cannot be compared to anything else.

When Samkara accepts both intuition and revelation, laying at the same time more stress upon the former, he welcomes the theological source and at the same time is anxious to go beyond, for he clearly feels the limitation of revelation as obtaining in immanent consciousness and therefore capable of communicating the truths of the relative order, but incapable of further penetration. The theological revelation is, therefore, the highest source of the deep mysteries of the dynamic Divine, but surely can bear no comparison to absolute intuition.

Though revelation is to be distinguished from intuition, still the truth of absolute intuition as the final illumination and the highest existence, is a truth of revelation. In the actual realisation of the identity of the subject and the object the very ground of revelation is denied. Intuition is, therefore, a kind of knowledge quite unique and is possible in a plane of existence which transcends the plane of revelation.

The absolute intuition as existence and as truth is the same fact appearing in the different levels of consciousness. As existence, it is the final reality. *Tattvamasi* is not a judgment. As truth it is supra-mental revelation indicative of an existence which is real in a different plane of consciousness. The limitation of relativity is still active, and therefore, the truth of identity can be indicated in the plane of revelation, but cannot be felt. And therefore, even in revelation it remains as a form of knowledge otherwise unobtainable. The absolute intuition is, therefore, the Fact-in-itself. Its truth is given by revelation, but it is realised as the undivided intuition.

*Tattvamasi* is, therefore, the highest philosophic fact, given out in revelation. Just as the symbol of Om carries an amount of sacredness with it because of its revelation, similarly the axiom

of Identity has in it a touch of holiness in it, as it is a truth that can be possibly obtained in revelation, for nothing can prove it. In this way the orthodox opinion establishes the truth of intuition (as transcendent existence). *Tattvamasi* is not, therefore, an affirmation of intellect, it stands on the sure footing of the divine knowledge. It brings to the fore the truth of the absolute Identity. Revelation here becomes the source of the knowledge of the highest intuition which transcends it. But the knowledge which revelation can give of the Identity is only indirect, it can point to the Absolute behind the eternal duration, but it is not qualified to completely grasp it. Revelation is possibly direct of the contents of eternal duration as centred in Isvara but it is indirect of the absolute Identity. Its truth it can communicate, though in actual realisation its very being is denied.

This is the inevitable consequence of Samkara's philosophy, though the theists fight shy of such a conclusion. And naturally so, for revelation is, according to them, the highest source of knowledge. So it is with the transcendentalists; but the transcendentalists are bold enough to accept the conclusion of Identity even at the cost of the ultimate denial of the revelation of Sruti.

It appears then that they are having such a unique experience that the common sources of knowledge including revelation cannot by the nature of the case be adequate enough to cover it, for revelation is possible in concrete consciousness, and not in the absolute. The framework of revelation is the same with the ordinary knowledge, they belong to the same order, notwithstanding the fineness and infallibility of the one and the grossness and fallibility of the other; but the transcendent intuition is fundamentally different from the both in this that it denies the very hold of concrete knowledge, and as such philosophic boldness cannot hesitate to deny even revelation in this sphere.



Philosophically speaking, absolute intuition introduces an element which is deeply significant, because it gives an experience which is otherwise impossible. The ordinary polarity of consciousness is denied and a unique experience is felt, for consciousness cannot in normal state break the polarity of subject and object. As such it is an intuition which exists severely alone. It completely changes the whole outlook and adaptation of life. And it is, therefore, psychologically a great fact which cannot be minimised.

Intuition in the Upanisads has this sense of transcendent existence in which the highest revelation becomes the highest existence. In it the psychological penetration becomes identified with metaphysical truth and it is, therefore, the identity of being and consciousness. The realistic logic has no place here, and the duality of being and knowledge, natural to relativistic consciousness, completely drops here.

It may indeed sound strange that intuition and being are completely one and it is this knowledge which characterises the supreme existence. It is called liberation, in the sense that the division of consciousness and reality is displaced by the identity of them. They are one and the same; theoretically the two do not exist. The same reality appears at one point as being, at another point as consciousness. This is avidyâ; vidyâ dismisses this original knowledge and native tendency and takes away the distinction of being and knowledge and finally understands their identity.

Nothing on this side of the polarisation of subject and object can give an adequate idea of this transcendence of existence. It is, therefore, in a sense unknown, though it is illumination.

Intuition is not then notion or thought in the Hegelian sense, nor even *Nous* in the sense in which Plotinus uses the term. The Hegelian notion is in essence logical reason which sees through the relations. The Hegelian thought is dynamic and as such Hegel goes beyond

the intellectualists who conceive the relative in a static background, but still the Hegelian notion sustains itself through relations. It transcends and synthesises relations. And the Absolute in Hegel is the synthesis of the infinite relations. It is the universal reason at the bottom of the connective links.

Plotinus does not exalt the discursive reason to the highest place. In itself, as Aristotle says, it moves nothing. For this reason, its world is not wholly real. But *Nous* beholds all things in their true relations without the need of this process.

*Nous* is then a form of supra-rational faculty akin to synthetic intuition, for it gives the synoptic view of reality.

But this should be distinguished from transcendent intuition, for in the one the relations are apprehended, in the other nothing is apprehended, neither existence nor relations. The synoptic view of things is possible up to the dynamic Divine, but not beyond it.

#### MYSTICAL SENSE :

##### INTUITION AND REASON

Is there a special mystical sense or faculty? Are mystical visions a gift of a special faculty of soul? Is it common to all or the peculiar mark of an esoteric fraternity? The question raises important psychological issues inasmuch as it discusses threadbare whether the mystics are the special specimens of humanity or they are the full fruition of human endeavours and evolution. And again, if there is a mystical sense, in what relations does it stand to the ordinary faculties of human mind?

The Upanisads certainly make rich references regarding the mystic sense. *Vide* Katha Upanisad I, ii, 12; II, vi, 10, 11, 12, 18, 14, 15, 16, 17; I, iii, 6, 7; I, ii, 12; I, ii, 22, 28. *Vide* Prasna Upanisad III, 6. *Vide* Mundaka Upanisad II, ii, 7; III, i, 5, 8, 9; III, ii, 8. *Vide* Aitareya Upanisad VI, 5, 8.

The above texts tell us that the mystical apprehension is not possible

in the ordinary way. The Atman to be recognised requires a special faculty or power, but this special faculty is not different from the ordinary intelligence. It is its full fruition. Intelligence in its ordinary functioning (specially in empiric intuition) works in collaboration with the mind and the senses, and naturally it cannot claim that immediacy which is its special privilege when it works in independence of the senses. Buddhi is the logical as well as the mystical faculty.

The Upanisadic teachers do not seem to have lent their support to a special faculty as suggested by the Greek teachers different from the common faculties, intellect or reason. Miss Underhill following the great Greeks suggests that the mystical faculty is different from the normal faculties of the mind, but it is in touch with them: "Heart, reason, will are there in full action, drawing their energy, not from the shadow show of sense but from the deeps of true being, where a lamp is lit and a consciousness awoke of which the sleepy crowd remains unconscious."

William James draws a distinction between a non-mystical consciousness or a rational consciousness and the mystical consciousness which gives a direct perception of the invisible. F. H. Bradley thinks somewhat in the same strain. The Absolute cannot be known by the abstract categories of a relational kind. These relations involve self-contradiction. The ultimate reality cannot contradict itself, and in one significant passage he says: "We can form a general idea of an absolute intuition in which phenomenal distinctions are merged." "A whole becomes immediate at a higher stage without losing any richness." Again, "Thought can form the idea of apprehension, something like *feeling in directness*."

Spinoza's distinction of ratiocination and *scientia intuitiva* is well known and "from this the third kind of knowledge arises the highest possible peace of mind." A host of other writers can be quoted in favour of the distinction be-

tween reason and intuition. Bradley makes a significant departure from the Neo-Hegelians who make reason the oracle of truth.

This distinction between reason and intuition is made absolute, probably because of the usual identification of reason with logical faculty, the faculty of discrimination and synthesis; and since the immediacy of perception is a felt necessity, the *scientia intuitiva* is discovered as a distinct faculty of knowledge having a distinct order of its own.

Max Müller conceives a *facultus occulta*. There is, according to him, in men both individually and generally (ontogenetically and phylogenetically) something that develops into perception, conception and faith, using the last word as meaning the apprehension of the infinite. He defines religion as "the mental faculty or disposition which independent of, nay in spite of sense and reason, enables a man to apprehend the infinite under different names and under varying disguises. Without that faculty no religion, not even the lowest worship of the idols and fetishes would be possible; and if we but listen attentively we can hear in all religions a groaning of the spirit, a struggle to conceive the inconceivable, to utter the unutterable, a longing after the infinite, a love of God."

"If then we openly admit a *third* function of our consciousness for the apprehension of what is infinite, that function need not be more mysterious than those of sense and reason."

Schliermacher defines religion as "the sense and test for the infinite" (Oman's translation quoted in Watt's *Intuition of God*). The sense and the test have in them a directness akin to feeling. The sense of vastness and expanse, the feeling of unrestricted overflow of being are elements of our experience not covered by the normal feeling. They lie deep in psychic being and become active occasionally. The psychological method lays special stress upon a *facultas occulta* as oracle of transcendental truth. This appeal to special

faculty helps the writers of the psychological school of mysticism to prove the timelessness of it. It raises mysticism to a plane where life is not affected by history and environment, and which helps to lend to mysticism an objective or transcendental touch that lies deep in human nature and is not affected by the influences of time and civilisation. The timelessness of mysticism is the great appeal of the psychological method.

The Upanisadic teachers are quite alive to the timelessness of mysticism, thinking as they do that truth is not affected by time. And there must be in man some such penetration, for the doubts and perplexities natural to a ratiocinative mind must be set aside, and the soul naked of ordinary logical or metaphysical presuppositions must be able to embrace the truth. Psychological penetration is the method of the mystics, conviction comes when mists of doubts have been cleared off from the mental horizon by the shining light of intuition. The surface mind is overweighed by the disability of the short-sightedness and by the 'antinomies' of reason. The sense of stiffness so natural to the surface mind and the persistent demand of a conclusion, both help to strike the depth of our being, from which the final illumination comes. The intellectual paralysis is soon followed by the higher awakening of spiritual life; the intellect which is the most powerful organ of the positive mind, must understand its own limitations before the new path can be sought. The King of the Dead, Yama, rightly tells Nachiketa that the truth cannot be attained by discursive intellect. "The wise can see it in spiritual intuition and seeing it cross death." (*Vide Katha Upanisad*).

But however impressed the ancient teachers are about the futility of the intellect as the oracle of truth, they do not go to the extreme of supposing that the mystical sense is completely unique and different from the normal faculties of the mind. Yama expresses clearly that Atman can be seen by the pene-

trating intelligence. It is seen by the wise with their superior intellect.

The Upanisadic teachers referred the logical and mystical faculty to the same organ, intelligence, which has as if a double function. It has been truly pointed out by Hermann: "That there are deeper levels of consciousness of which the man who lives only in his discursive understanding little dreams and that a sudden awakening or the gentle or persisting knocking of the 'dweller in the innermost' may throw open a door into a new and larger world, is a sound mystical doctrine, but that this implies a double consciousness or that the consciousness ceases to be rational when it becomes mystical, is a gratuitous assumption which has done more than any other to invalidate the message of message." (*Vide Herman's The Meaning and Value of Mysticism*, p. 272). The Indian thinkers are uniform in their opinion on this point. Though they draw a distinction between reason and immediate knowledge, still they refer both of them to the same organ of intelligence which functions differently.

The Mundaka has it: "The wise perceive it by knowledge (gnosis) which gleams forth as blissful immortality." "This Atman is obtainable by austerity, by proper knowledge, by the constant practice of chastity." "The meditative, pure in being, sees the partless by the bliss of knowledge."

We have been told that the Atman can be realised in Adhyâtma Yoga and by Jnâna-prasâda. The former is spiritual intuition, the latter is the peace of knowledge. Again it is said that Atman is indicated by *Neti Neti*. It is apparent, therefore, that the teachers recognise the faculty of immediate apprehension of truth. This faculty is intelligence. It must be chastened and purified before it can vouchsafe the superior wisdom. *Parâ-vidyâ* (superior or esoteric wisdom) gives us the knowledge of *Aksara* (the indestructible). The *Parâ-vidyâ* is a special capacity of intelligence to apprehend truth. Intelligence

has wide functions. It is the faculty of mediate as well as of immediate knowledge. Even in normal perception intelligence plays an important part. The senses make report to the intelligence whence the direct perception comes. The mystical perception differs from the sense-perception in this that in it no reference is necessary to the senses. Intelligence works quite independently of the instrumental media of the senses. The mystical sense, therefore, is nothing uncommon, though it can be present in those that rear up the faculty of intuitive apprehension. The reference to the pure being in the Mundaka Upanisad is significant, for the purity of being can wake up the sleeping powers of intelligence and can endow it with the rare vision and uncommon powers. It starts the fine psychism and evokes the subtle dynamism of our being and brings with them the knowledge of the unseen and uncommon. Psychism, in Indian philosophy, is not the ordinary function of intelligence (Buddhi), for besides the normal powers, the Buddhi has in it esoteric powers which become evident and manifest when the psychism of Buddhi has been developed by discipline.

The fine psychism develops the cosmic powers inherent in Buddhi; Buddhi in its causal aspect can receive inspiration from the cosmic dynamism working in and through it. The more the intelligence gets purified, the more it becomes subtle, the more it moves with the expansive vision and cosmic sympathy. Indeed there is no limit to the potentiality of Buddhi, and if our mental dynamism be freed from the obstructions of the gross elements and unresolved collision implied in them, the cosmic intuitions and powers inherent in Buddhi can be clearly felt. Buddhi is then no longer the logical faculty which discerns the consistency and squares the contradictions of ideas, it is also the mystical faculty which gives intuitions of the subtle move of life and consciousness.

The fine psychism should not be confounded with the apprehension of truth. The fine psychism can give us lofty vision and fine powers. It may penetrate into the mysteries of immanent life, it can reveal the hidden truths of instinctive and supra-instinctive urges. It is competent to do so, for it is endowed with the luminosity of Sattva. The luminosity of Sattva cannot leave any part of our mental and supramental dynamism hidden to us. It is more luminous than the X-rays. It can penetrate into the subtle and causal aspect of our being.

If the Sattvic intelligence is competent to reveal the hidden mysteries of life, it is no less competent to go deeper and feel the self-luminous Atman. The luminosity of Buddhi is the luminosity of Sattva, and the luminosity of Self is the luminosity of consciousness. The two differ. Since the transcendent intuition denies all relations, it certainly cannot be intuited by the luminosity of Buddhi. On the other hand, the luminosity of Buddhi is clearly felt to be the borrowed light of the self-luminous Self. This luminous Buddhi feels the transcendence of Atman for the final emancipation from the world of manifoldness. The final illumination comes with the unique experience of the immediacy where the psychic dynamism can have no play. And therefore, this experience is quite new and clearly unanalysable. The immediacy of revelation in psychic dynamism is different from this kind of immediacy in which psychism plays no part. The former is the immediacy of knowledge imparted by the highly strung Buddhi, the latter is the immediacy of Atman. The one is supersensuous but still empiric, the other is quite transcendental.

The latter is, therefore, a change in the mode of apprehension. It is quite different from normal apprehension. The moment intelligence has a foreshadow of this apprehension, it dies a natural death, and the whole outlook of the mystic life changes from the *vita-con-*

mental vision than by the laborious colligation and observation of physical phenomena. The same inner vision enabled them to perceive unity in diversity of life, the Undivided One in the divided many, and to base upon this firm foundation that principle of all-embracing altruism which is the most valuable product of Hindu wisdom. On the other hand, we have, in the West, an overwhelming mass of literature bearing upon evolution and an infinity of other topics, but there is a sad dearth of such penetrating mental vision as would sift the "chaff from the wheat," and extract a few grains of wisdom out of it. The votaries of Natural Science have built up a gigantic labyrinth—an admirable, wonderful labyrinth no doubt, but a labyrinth, in the intricate and bewildering mazes of which one is apt to get lost altogether, without any illumination as to the goal of his life and how he is to attain it.

The prevailing tendency of the cultivation of philosophy among the ancients was towards idealism and other-worldliness, as that of the cultivation of Natural Science is towards materialism and this-worldliness. Plato, for instance, valued Mathematics only because it "habituates the mind to the contemplation of pure truth and raises us above the material universe." He remonstrated with his friend Archytas who had invented powerful machines on mathematical principles, and declared "this was to degrade a noble intellectual exercise into a low craft fit only for carpenters and wheel-wrights." Archimedes was half ashamed of his inventions which were the wonders of his age. The cultured classes among the ancients kept aloof from industrialism and militarism as those among the moderns are steeped in them. Visvāmitra, the divine patron of arts in India, receives worship only from artisans, and he was in no way superior to Maya, the Dānava patron of arts. Sukrāchārya, the greatest Indian inventor of ancient times, of whom we

have any traditions, was a professor of the Daityas. From remote antiquity, the profession of the soldier in China was looked down upon. He was placed last in her scale of social usefulness. She like India has never made a hero of any man whose sole title to distinction is success in warfare. The emperor of China was probably the only ruler of the world, who never wore a sword.

The spiritual character of his culture has made the Hindu exalt humanitarianism above patriotism, renunciation above sensual enjoyment, and altruism above egoism, as the materialism of his culture has made the Occidental exalt patriotism over humanitarianism, enjoyment above renunciation, egoism above altruism. The Hindus sought happiness by self-denial, not by self-indulgence, by curtailing the wants of animal life rather than by multiplying them, by suppressing desires rather than by gratifying them. Their object has been to secure the good or well-being of humanity by the development of the inner life for which more or less of abstention from sensual gratification, a life of more or less of ascetic simplicity, is requisite. In this respect Hindu culture is at one with the Roman or Greek culture. No Hindu teacher could have exhorted his disciples to be independent of external circumstances more forcibly or more earnestly than did the Socratic or the Stoic sage. Even Epicurus with whom pleasure was the sole ultimate good, maintained the immense superiority of the pleasures of the mind over those of the body, and the Epicurean sage, no less than the Vedantic or the Stoic, sought for happiness and tranquillity from within rather than from without. The basic principle of the modern culture of the West, on the other hand, is to secure the well-being of man by perpetually provoking and feeding his sensual desires and by eternally inventing means and appliances for gratifying them. The goal of invention to-day becomes its starting point to-morrow.

## II

Thus the two cultures are so diametrically opposed that their satisfactory combination is impossible. When Sir Devaprasad talks of combination, I think he means combination of Western education\* and Indian culture. The West has within the last century made most remarkable advances in various branches of knowledge especially of Natural Science, and we have much to learn from it; and there is not the shadow of a doubt that English education "has done much to enlighten and expand views." It has relaxed the restraints of authority and of conventionalities sanctioned by immemorial usage. Literary ambition has a freer scope and has been soaring into regions hitherto unknown in India. The Indian intellect has ventured out of the well-beaten paths of theology and metaphysics. The medical and mathematical sciences which yielded such notable results to the ancient Hindus, are now being cultivated on the improved methods of the West. Biography, novel (in its modern forms), archaeology, and the different branches of Natural Science are subjects almost entirely new in modern Indian literature.

But these beneficent results have been overwhelmingly counteracted by the effects of a strong bias in favour of Western culture, created, fostered and propagated by the present system of education. It cannot be gainsaid that a rise to a higher standard of living is the necessary concomitant of advance in civilization. Such a rise took place in the case of the Indians as they advanced in civilization some two thousand years ago, and until recently they kept to the standard of decency, comfort, and luxury, which they then attained, and which is suited to their physical and economic conditions. The so-called "rise" which is now taking place under the influence of a highly materialistic culture like the Western, is only an

exchange of this indigenous standard for an exotic one suited to quite different physical, economic and social conditions. The exchange instead of benefiting our community is, on the whole, doing endless mischief. For instance, in a climate where the minimum of clothing, consistent with the indigenous idea of decency, is conducive to health and comfort, the swathing of the body in a multiplicity of cumbersome apparel from head to foot in accordance with the Western idea of decency produces discomfort, injures health and drains the purse without any equivalent advantage. The quantity of clothing now needed in a middle class household is treble, quadruple or more of what would have been sufficient two or three generations ago. The feet must be shod with boots and shoes of Western shape and style, which are much more expensive and much less comfortable than indigenous shoes and sandals. The *Hookah* has been replaced by the much more injurious and the much more costly cigarette. Cheap native toys no longer amuse our children. Our young men no longer find pleasure in native games and athletic exercises which cost nothing, but must have foot-ball, tennis, badminton, cricket, billiards, etc., which cost a great deal. Indigenous amusements and entertainments for which the great majority had to pay nothing, have been superseded by theatres, circuses, cinemas, etc., in the Western fashion, which everybody must pay for. House-keeping in the old style which utilised the resources of the country to the fullest possible advantage, recognised the tending of the cow as one of its most important duties, and turned out highly palatable delicacies and artistic utilities out of inexpensive material, is a vanishing art in New India. In the dietary of New India, such simple and wholesome articles of refreshment as *Chirā*, *Muri*, *Khoi*, cocoanut, gram, *Chhāndā*, *Gur*, etc., are being superseded by much more expensive and generally much less salutary

\*By "education" is here meant instruction in various branches of knowledge.

chops, cutlets, biscuits, refined sugar, pastry, etc., and *Sharbat* has been replaced by the highly deleterious tea.

This approximation of the standard of living of one of the poorest communities of the world to that of one of the richest has in various ways proved a veritable social menace. Impoverishment is a comparative term. If one having comparatively more money than before, has yet less for his wants, he is certainly poorer. I do not think I am exaggerating when I say, that the great majority of our middle class have been impoverished in this sense. The candle burns at both ends. Their resources are exhausted on the one hand by the inordinate enhancement of the prices of indigenous necessities, and on the other, by the so-called "elevation" of the standard of living which is enlarging their wants. Even incomes which formerly would have been regarded as opulence, are now hardly deemed to be bare competence. While milk and the various preparations of milk which form our principal articles of nutrition suited to the climate, have become so very dear that the great majority of our middle class cannot afford to get them in sufficient quantity for bare subsistence, they have to spend large amounts upon the gratification of the new tastes for an infinity of inutilities, futilities, fatuities and superfluities, which have sprung up among them. The enormously increased stringency of struggle for existence has proved to be a potent cause for our recent physical and moral degeneration. There is but little doubt that one of the main causes of the cult of bomb and revolver, which for sometime past has been masquerading in the guise of patriotism among some of our young men, is economic. Then, again, the pursuit of the *ignis fatuus* of political Swaraj on the Western model, which is a result of the strong Neo-Indian bias for Western culture, has caused the destruction of genuine village self-government and of communal concord which were two of the

main bulwarks of our cultural Swaraj, and has led a good number of the flower of Indian youth into the dangerous and demoralising path of revolutionary conspiracies. Further, obsessed by pro-Western prepossessions, there has sprung up a band of aggressive, iconoclastic reformers who are doing incalculable mischief by endeavouring to bring Indian Society into line with the Western.\*

The baneful consequences of Western culture are not confined to India. But as I have shown elsewhere,† they have more or less affected the whole of humanity. However magnificent, imposing and fascinating it appears from the spectacular point of view, it is, in reality, founded upon falsehood and is bolstered up by fraud. Its basic principle is to secure the well-being of man by the propagation of the cult of "wanting more wants". A principle more false and fallacious could hardly be conceived. Its falsehood was exemplified in the life of Bacon who first lucidly enunciated it, and who was unquestionably the greatest prophet of modern civilization. The world has not witnessed a more towering and a more wonderful intellectual giant, and a more miserable and a more contemptible moral pigmy.

A culture with foundation so unreal and insecure has necessitated its maintenance by deception, by the scientific exploitation of the weak under various ingenious pretences, by make-believe democratic institutions, by the propagation of illusory hopes of peace and prosperity, and of notions of sham equality, liberty and fraternity. The great majority of mankind are credulous, and the pursuit of Will-o-the-Wisps has always a special fascination for them. The

\* The writer has dealt with these subjects in his *Swaraj, Cultural and Political; Some Present-day Superstitions, and Survival of Hindu Civilization, Part I*, "Impoverishment of India and its Remedy," and Part 2, "Physical Degeneration, its Causes and Remedies."

† *Epochs of Civilization; Degeneration, a World Problem; An Eastern View of Western Progress.*

tendency of civilization from remote antiquity has always been towards luxury—a tendency which has received immense impetus from the modern industrial civilization of the West. And, now, more than ever, there is no truer gospel for civilized man than that of renunciation, one of the fundamental principles of Indian culture, which promotes the growth of genuine altruism.

It is true that Western culture is directly "limited to and influences a small fraction of our people." But they are the most vocal and influential of our community; and, as we have seen above, the pernicious influence of their action and example has permeated down to its lowest strata. I am strongly inclined to think that when Sir Devaprasad upholds the cause of the "institutions of Western culture," he has in his mind "Western knowledge." We should not only not shut it out, but should heartily welcome the remarkable advances which the West has made in various branches of learning, especially Natural Sciences. And, so far as I am aware, such learning is included in the curricula of institutions

which have been started for the revival of Indian culture. And some of them at least like the Brahmacharya Vidyâ-laya of Ranchi, having regard to our existing environment train their pupils so that if they desire they may study for University degrees. The Arts side of the National Council of Education in Bengal failed, because it ignored this environment, but its Technical side is flourishing, because it recognises it. It would be unwise to blink the fact that, under existing conditions, however one may deplore them, the avenues of employment are closed to a large number of our middle-class people who have not the hall-mark of a University degree. What the proposed society for the revival of Indian culture will endeavour to do is to give such a training to our youth as would enable them to resist the sinister, though often insidious, influence of institutions which serve to foster and propagate Western culture. Thus the objection to its establishment raised by educationists like Sir Devaprasad Sarvadhikary appears to me to be based upon a misunderstanding which, it is to be hoped, this article will remove.

## MAYA AND THE MARCH OF FREEDOM\*

By ROMAIN ROLLAND

It is no part of my present intention to enter into an argument about the thought of the two great Indians, whose lives I have just related. The material of Vivekananda's ideas, no more than those of Ramakrishna, was not their personal conquest. It belongs to the deepest thought inherent in Hinduism. The simple and modest Ramakrishna made no pretensions to the honour of founding a metaphysical school. And Vivekananda, though more intellectual

and therefore more conscious of his doctrine, knew and maintained that in it was nothing new. On the contrary he would have been inclined to defend them on the strength of their exalted spiritual ancestry.

"I am Sankara!" he said.

They would both have smiled at the illusion, so general in the age, that makes a man believe himself the inventor or proprietor of some form of thought. We know that the thoughts of mankind move within a narrow circle, and that, while they alternately appear and disappear, they are always there. Moreover, those which seem to us the newest are often in reality the most

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ancient; it is simply that they have been longer absent from the world.

So I am not prepared to embark upon the vast and profitless task of discussing the Hinduism of the Paramahansa and his great disciple; for if I wished to probe to the depths of the question, I would be unable to confine myself to Hinduism. The essential part of their experience and mystic conception, as well as the metaphysical constructions of which these are at the same time the foundation and the keystone, far from being peculiar to India as she has the tendency to believe, are held by her in common with the two great religious metaphysics of the West, the Hellenic and the Christian. The Divine Infinity, the Absolute God, immanent and transcendent, who is poured out in the constant flood of the *Natura Rerum*, and yet is concentrated in the most minute of its particles,—the Divine Revelation, diffused throughout the universe and yet inscribed in the centre of each soul,—the great paths of reunion with the Infinite Force, in particular that of total Negation,—the “deification” of the enlightened soul, after its identification with Unity—these are all explained by Plotinus of Alexandria and by the early masters of Christian mysticism, with an ordered power and beauty, which need fear no comparison with the monumental structure of India. On the other hand Indian mystics would do very well to study it.<sup>1</sup>

But obviously within the limits of this work, I cannot give even a bird’s-eye view of the historic variations that have taken place in the conception of the Divine Infinity and in the great science of union with the Absolute. It would require a history of the whole world; for such ideas belong to the very flesh of humanity in the past, the present and the future. Their character is universal and eternal. I cannot

begin to discuss even the question of their worth (problematical as all the ideas of the human spirit without exception), or the question bound up in it, that of the great scientific problem of “Introversion”. . . . I shall confine myself here to a summary of Vedântic thought, as it has been explained in these modern days through the mouth of Vivekananda.

All great doctrine, as it recurs periodically in the course of the centuries, is coloured by reflections of the age wherein it reappears; and it further receives the imprint of the individual soul through which it runs. Thus it emerges to work upon men of an age. Every idea as a pure idea remains in an elementary stage, like electricity dispersed in the atmosphere, unless it finds the mighty condenser of personality. It must become incarnate like the gods. “*Et caro factus est.*”

It is this mortal flesh of the immortal idea, which gives it its temporary aspect of belonging to a day or a century, whereby it is communicated to us.

I shall try to show how closely allied is the aspect of Vivekananda’s thought to our own, with our special needs, torments, aspirations, and doubts, which urge us ever forward, like a blind mole, by instinct upon the road leading to the light. Naturally I hope to be able to make other Westerners, who resemble me, feel the attraction that I feel for this elder brother, the son of the Ganges, who of all modern men achieved the highest equilibrium between the diverse forces of thought, and was one of the first to sign a treaty of peace between the two forces, eternally warring within us, the forces of reason and faith.

If there is one feeling that is absolutely essential to me (and I speak as the representative of thousands of Europeans) it is that of Freedom. Without it nothing has any value. . . . “*Das Wesen des Geistes ist die Freiheit.*”

<sup>2</sup> “And was made flesh.”

<sup>3</sup> “The essence of the spirit is Freedom.” (Hegel).

<sup>1</sup> We regret we cannot accept the author’s views for reasons which we hope to show another time. There are reasons to believe that Hellenic and Christian mysticism was indebted to Indian mysticism.—Ed.

But those who are best qualified to estimate its unique value are those who have known most fully the suffering of chains, either those of especially crushing circumstances or the torments of their own nature. When I was not seven years old, the universe of a sudden seemed to my eyes to be like a vast rat-trap wherein I was caught. From that moment all my efforts were directed to escape through the bars—until one day of my youth, under slow and constant pressure, one bar suddenly gave way and I sprang to freedom.<sup>4</sup>

These spiritual experiences which marked me for life, brought me singularly near to the spirit of India when later I came to know it. For thousands of years she has felt herself entangled in a gigantic net, and for thousands of years she has sought for some way of escaping through the meshes. This ceaseless effort to escape from a closed trap has communicated a passion for freedom, ever fresh, ardent and untiring (for it is always in danger) to all Indian geniuses whether Divine Incarnations, wise philosophers or poets; but I know few examples so striking as the personality of Vivekananda.

The sweeping strokes of this wild bird's wings took him, like Pascal, across the whole heaven of thought from one pole to the other, from the abyss of servitude to the gulf of freedom. His tragic cry immediately conjures up the chain of rebirth :

"Why! the memory of one life is like millions of years of confinement, and they want to wake up the memory of many lives! Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. . ."

But later he extols the splendour of existence :

"Never forget the glory of human nature! We are the greatest God that ever was or ever will be. Christs and Buddhas are but waves on the boundless ocean which *I am*."

<sup>4</sup> I have related these experiences in a chapter of intimate memories as yet unpublished: *The Inner Voyage*, which so far has only been shown to my Indian friends.

Therein lies no contradiction. For Vivekananda the two conditions are co-existent in men. "What is this universe? . . . In freedom it rises, in freedom it rests." And yet with each movement every living being makes the chains of slavery eat more deeply into his flesh. But the dissonance of the two sentiments blends into harmony—a harmonious dissonance which, according to Heraclitus, is the opposite of the serene and sovereign homophony of the Buddha. Buddhism says to men :

"Realise that all this is illusion," while the Vedântic Advaitist says :

"Realise that in illusion is the real!"

Nothing in the world is to be denied : for Mâyâ, Illusion, has its own reality. We are caught in the network of phenomena. Perhaps it would be a higher and more radical wisdom to cut the net, like Buddha, by total negation, and to say :

"They do not exist."

But in the light of the poignant joys and tragic sorrows, without which life would be poor indeed, it is more human, more precious to say :

"They exist. They are a snare."

and to lift the eyes from this mirror to the larks, there to discover that it is all a game of the sun. The game of the sun, Brahman, is Mâyâ, the huntress with Nature her net.

Before going further let us rid ourselves of the equivocation, which is inherent in the very name of Mâyâ for even the most learned men of the West, and see how it is conceived by intellectual Vedântism of the present day; for as it stands it raises a fictitious barrier between us. We are wrong to think of it as total illusion, pure hallucination, vain smoke without a fire : for it is this idea which makes us keep our derogatory opinion that the East is incapable of facing the reality of life, and sees in it nothing but the stuff that dreams are made of, a conception that leads it to float through life, half asleep, motionless and supine, eyes fixed on the blue depths, like the webs of wandering spiders floating in the autumn breeze.

But I believe I am faithful to the real thought of great modern Vedântism, as it was incarnate in Vivekananda, by proving that his conception of Nature was not vastly different from that of modern science.

The true Vedântic spirit does not start out with a system of preconceived ideas. It possessed absolute liberty and unrivalled courage among religions with regard to the facts to be observed and the diverse hypotheses laid down for their co-ordination. Never having been hampered by a priestly order each man has been entirely free to search wherever he pleased for the spiritual explanation of the spectacle of the universe. As Vivekananda reminded his listeners, there was a time when believers, atheists, and downright materialists could be found preaching their doctrines side by side in the same temple;—and further on I shall show what esteem Vivekananda publicly professed for the great materialists of Western science. “Liberty,” he said, “is the sole condition of spiritual progress.” Europe has known how to achieve it (or to demand it) more effectively than India in the realm of politics,<sup>5</sup> but she has attained it and even imagined it infinitely less in the spiritual realm. The mutual misunderstanding and intolerance of our so-called “free thinkers” and of our diverse religious professions has no longer the power to astonish us: the normal attitude of the average European may be summed up as “I am Truth!”, while the great Vedântist would prefer as his motto Whitman’s “All is Truth.” He does not reject any one of the proposed attempts at explanation but from each he seeks to extract the grain of permanent reality: hence when brought face to face with modern science he regards it as the purest manifestation of real religious sense—for it is seeking to seize

the essence of Truth by penetration and sincere striving.

The conception of *Mâyâ* is viewed from this standpoint. “It is not,” said Vivekananda, “a theory for the explanation of the world.”<sup>6</sup> It is purely and simply a statement of fact” to be observed of all observers. “It is what we are, and what we see,” so let us experiment. We are placed in a world which can be reached only through the doubtful medium of the mind and senses. This world only exists in relation to them. If they change it will also change. The existence we give it has no unchangeable, immovable, absolute reality. It is an indefinable mixture of reality and appearance, of certainty and illusion. It cannot be the one without the other. And there is nothing Platonic about this contradiction! It takes us by the throat at every minute of our life of passion and action—it has been perceived throughout the ages by all the clear thinking minds of the universe. It is the very condition of our knowledge. Though we are unceasingly called to the solution of insoluble problems the key to which seems as necessary as love or bread, we cannot pass the circle of atmosphere imposed by nature itself upon our lungs. And the eternal contradiction between our aspirations and the wall enclosing them—between two orders having no common measure—between contradictory realities, the implacable and real fact of death and the no less real, immediate and undeniable consciousness of life,—between the irrevocable working of certain intellectual and moral laws and the perpetual flux of all the conceptions of the spirit and heart—the

<sup>5</sup> At the moment she is using the same energy to crush it. And bourgeois democracies, while still maintaining “parliamentary” etiquette, are not in this respect behind communist or fascist dictators.

<sup>6</sup> It would be more exact to say, if criticism is allowed, that it is a fact of observation, insufficiently explained, if not actually unexplained, as most Vedântic philosophers agree. (Cf. for example the most recent exposition of Vedântism by Dr. Mahendranath Sircar, M.A., Ph.D., Professor of Philosophy at the Sanskrit College, Calcutta: *Comparative Studies in Vedantism*, Oxford University Press, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras, 1928.)

incessant variations of good and evil, of truth and falsehood on both sides of a line in space and time—the whole coil of serpents wherein from the beginning of time the Laocoön of human thought has found itself intertwined so that as it unties itself on one side it only ties its knots more tightly on the other—all this is the real world. And the real world is *Mâyâ*.

How then can it be defined? Only by a word that has been made fashionable by science in these days—Relativity. In Vivekananda's day it had hardly appeared above the horizon; its light was not yet bright enough to fill the dark sky of scientific thought; and Vivekananda only uses it incidentally. But it is clear that it gives the precise meaning of his conception; and the passage I have just quoted in the form of a note leaves no room for doubt on the subject. Nothing but the mode of expression is different. Vedântic Advaitism (that is to say, impersonal and absolute Monism) of which he is the greatest modern representative, declares that *Mâyâ* cannot be defined as non-existence any more than it can be defined as existence. It is an intermediate form between the equally absolute Being and non-Being. Hence it is the Relative. It is not Existence, for, says the Hindu Vedântist, it is the sport of the Absolute. It is not non-Existence because this sport exists and we cannot deny it. For the type of man, so common in the West, who is content with the game from which they

may derive profit, it is the sum total of existence: the great revolving Wheel bounds their horizon. But for great hearts the only existence worthy of the name is that of the Absolute. They are impelled to lay hold of it to escape from the Wheel. The cry of humanity comes across the centuries, as it sees the sand of its days running through its fingers together with all that it has constructed,—love, ambition, work and life itself:

"This world's wheel within wheel is terrible mechanism; if we put our hands in it, as soon as we are caught, we are gone. . . . We are all being dragged along by this mighty, complex world-machine."

How then can we find the path to liberty?

For in the case of Vivekananda or of any other man cast in the heroic mould there can be no question of throwing the arms in advance, raising the hands and resigning himself to despair—still less is it possible to cover the eyes as do some agnostics, while they chant "What do I know?" and to gulp down the fleeting and passing pleasures which brush past our bodies like ghosts floating along the edge of the river! . . . What is it that will assuage the cry of the Soul, the Great Hunger? Certainly these rags of flesh will not fill up the gulf! All the Epicure's roses will not keep him from starting back like the horses of Orcagna in the Campo Santo,<sup>9</sup> from the stench of putrefying corpses. He must get out of the graveyard, out of the circle of tombs away from the crematorium. He must win freedom or die! And better to die, if need arises, for freedom!<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> *Karma Yoga*, Chapter VIII.

<sup>10</sup> Allusion to the famous fresco of Orcagna in the Campo Santo of Pisa. (XVth century.)

<sup>11</sup> This brings out the error made by the psycho-pathologist in attributing to free Introversion a character of *flight*, misunderstanding its true character of *combat*. Great mystics, of the type of Ruysbroeck, Eckhart, Jean de la Croix and Vivekananda, do not

<sup>7</sup> "Good and bad are not two cut-and-dried, separate existences. . . The very phenomenon which is appearing to be good now, may appear to be bad to-morrow. . . The fire that burns the child, may cook a good meal for a starving man. . . The only way to stop evil, therefore, is to stop good also. . . To stop death, we shall have to stop life also . . . each of them (the two opposing terms) is but a different manifestation of the same thing. . . The Vedanta says, there must come a time when we shall look back and laugh at the ideals which make us afraid of giving up our individuality."

(Lecture on *Maya and Illusion*. *Complete Works*, II. pp. 97-98).

"Better to die on the battlefield than to live a life of defeat!"

This trumpet call from ancient India, sounded again by Vivekananda, according to him is the motto, the word of command, written on the starting post of all religions, whence they set out on their thousand year march. But it is also the motto of the great scientific spirit. "I will hew out a way for myself. I will know the truth, or give up my life in the attempt."<sup>11</sup> With both science and religion the original impulse is the same—and so too is the end to be achieved—Freedom. Is it not true that the learned man who believes in nature's laws, seeks to discover them solely for the purpose of mastering them so that he may use them in the service of the spirit, which their knowledge has set free? And what have all the religions in the world been seeking? They project this same sovereign freedom, which is refused to every individual being, into a God, into a higher, greater, more powerful Being who is not bound—(in whatever form they may imagine Him)—and freedom is to be won by the meditation of the Conqueror: God, the Gods, the Absolute or the idol; all are the agents of power, set up by humanity, in order to realise in its stead those gigantic aspirations, for which it can find no assuagement in a life that it knows is ever slipping away: for they are its bread of life, the reason for its very existence.

"And so all are marching towards freedom. We are all journeying towards freedom."<sup>12</sup>

And Vivekananda recalled the mysterious answer of the Upanishads to the question they propounded:

"The question is: 'What is this universe? From what does it arise? Into what does it go?' And the answer is: 'In freedom it rises, in

flee. They look reality straight in the face, and then close in battle.

<sup>11</sup> Lecture on *Maya and Freedom*.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

freedom it rests, and into freedom it melts away.'"

You cannot give up this idea of freedom, so Vivekananda continued. Without it your being is lost. It is no question of science or religion, of unreason or reason, of good or evil, of hatred or love,—all beings without any exception hear the voice that calls them to freedom. And all follow it like the children who followed the Piper of Hamelin.<sup>13</sup> The ferocious struggle of the world comes from the fact that all are striving among themselves as to who can follow the enchanter most closely and attain the promised end. But all these missions fight blindly without understanding the real meaning of the voice. But those to whom understanding is given realise in the same instant not only its meaning, but the harmony of the battlefield, whereon the planets, the brothers of the peoples, revolve, where all living beings, saints and sinners, good and bad (so called according to whether they stumble or walk erect—but all towards the same end), struggling or united press on towards the one goal: Freedom.<sup>14</sup>

There can be then no question of opening up an unknown way for them. Rather distracted mankind must learn that there are a thousand paths more or less certain, more or less straight, but all going there—and must be helped to free themselves from the quagmire wherein they are walking, or from the thickets whereon they are being torn, and shown among all these multitudinous ways the most direct, the *Viae Romanae*, the royal roads: the great Yogas: Work (Karma-Yoga), Love (Bhakti-Yoga), Knowledge (Jnâna-Yoga).

<sup>13</sup> Allusion to the old Rhenish legend, told by Goethe, of the "Rat-catcher" whose flute captivated all who heard it and forced them to follow him. (The story is used by Browning in the *Pied Piper of Hamelin*.—Translator.)

<sup>14</sup> And this object, as the Advaita Vedânta shows, is the subject itself, the real nature and essence of each one. It is MYSELF.

## ASHTAVAKRA SAMHITA

By SWAMI NITYASWARUPANANDA

एकस्मिन्नव्यये शान्ते चिदाकाशेऽमले त्वयि ।

कुतो जन्म कुतो कर्म कुतोऽहंकार एव च ॥१३॥

एकस्मिन् In the One अव्यये in the undecaying शान्ते in the calm चिदाकाशे in the space which is Intelligence अमले in the pure ( च and ) त्वयि in you जन्म birth कुतः from where कर्म action कुतः from where अहंकारः egoism एव even कुतः where- from च and ( भवति is ).

13. Wherefrom will there be birth,<sup>1</sup> action<sup>2</sup> and even egoism<sup>3</sup> for thee who art one, immutable, calm, the space<sup>4</sup> of Intelligence and pure?

[<sup>1</sup> Birth—One who is self-existent, all in all, and immutable, cannot be born; for birth implies the existence of parents and change, but nothing exists besides him.

<sup>2</sup> Action—Action also implies change and the desire to gain something which is not in one's possession. But the man of realisation knows himself as the Self which is calm and perfect.

<sup>3</sup> Egoism—Therefore there cannot be any sense of the ego also in him; it results from our identification of ourselves with body and mind. But he perceives himself to be the "space of Intelligence" in which there is no trace of duality or variety,—he is pure.

<sup>4</sup> Space etc.—Space is here identical with the *Chit*. *Chit* has been conceived as *ākāsha*, because like *ākāsha* it is all-pervasive and unaffected. Also, all perception requires as an essential factor the existence of *ākāsha*. Therefore three different *ākāshas* have been conceived: (1) *Mahākāsha*, the great space, which is our ordinary space, in which we perceive external objects; (2) *Chittākāsha*, the mental space;—everything that we imagine, dream or supersensibly perceive is in the mental space; and (3) *Chidākāsha*,—the Intelligence space,—the space in which the Self perceives itself;—here space is not anything different from the perceiver and the perceived as in the other two *ākāshas*, for in Self-perception, it is all one,—there is neither subject nor object; hence here space is identical with the Self. Really speaking, in Self-perception there is no space; but the word 'space' is used to extend the analogy of the other two kinds of perception to Self-perception.]

यत् पश्यसि तत्रैकस्त्वमेव प्रतिभासते ।

किं पृथक् भासते स्वर्णात् कटकाङ्गदनुपुरम् ॥ १४ ॥

यत् What त्वं you पश्यसि see तत्र there एकः alone त्वं you एव verily प्रतिभासते appear कटकाङ्गदनुपुरं bracelets, armlets and anklets स्वर्णात् from gold पृथक् different भासते appear किम् ( interrogative ).

14. In whatever you perceive you alone appear. Do bracelets, armlets and anklets appear different from gold?

[Advaita Vedanta holds that the Self is the only reality and the universe is no other than the Self itself,—only names and forms have been superimposed on it. Just as the reality of gold ornaments is gold itself and nothing but gold, so is the universe nothing different from the Self. The Self alone exists.]

अयं सोऽहमयं नाहं विभागमिति सन्त्यज ।

सर्वमात्मेति निश्चित्य निःसङ्कल्पः सुखी भव ॥ १५ ॥

अहं I अयं (pleonastic) सः He अहं I अयं this न not (अस्मि am) इति this विभाग distinction सन्त्याज give up completely आत्मा Self सर्वे all इति this निश्चित्य realising निःसङ्कल्पः free from desire सुखी happy भव be.

15. Give up completely such distinctions as 'I am He'<sup>1</sup> and 'I am not this.'<sup>2</sup> Consider all<sup>3</sup> as the Self and be desireless and happy.

[One should not think that one is only the Transcendental Reality and one is not the universe. As explained in the preceding verse, the universe is also the Self.

<sup>1</sup> He—the transcendental Self.

<sup>2</sup> This—the universe.

<sup>3</sup> All—both the transcendental and the relative reality.]

तवैवाज्ञानतो विश्वं त्वमेकः परमार्थतः ।

त्वत्तोऽन्यो नास्ति संसारी नासंसारी च कश्चन ॥ १६ ॥

तव Your एव verily अज्ञानतः through ignorance विश्वं universe (भवति is) परमार्थतः in reality त्वं you एकः one त्वत्तः than you अन्यः other कश्चन any संसारी transmigratory (Jiva) न not अस्ति is (त्वत्तः अन्यः कश्चन) असंसारी non-transmigratory (transcendental Self) न not (अस्ति is) च and.

16. It is verily through your ignorance that the universe exists. In reality you alone are. There is no *Jiva* or *Iswara* other than you.

[So long as the universe exists we have to conceive the Self in two aspects. In one aspect it is the transmigratory one (*Jiva*, going from birth to death and death to birth,—*Samsâri*), and in another aspect, it is *A-Samsâri* (God, beyond the cycle of birth and death, eternal and unchanging). But when the universe no longer exists, this distinction vanishes, and the universe, as has been said, exists in our ignorance. When we are rid of this ignorance, the universe disappears. So in fact, 'you alone are.']

भ्रान्तिमात्रमिदं विश्वं न किञ्चिदिति निश्चयी ।

निर्वासनः स्फूर्तिमात्रो न किञ्चिदिव शाम्यति ॥ १७ ॥

इदं This विश्वं universe भ्रान्तिमात्रं mere illusion किञ्चित् anything न not इति this निश्चयी one who knows for certain निर्वासनः desireless स्फूर्तिमात्रः Intelligence itself (सन् being) किञ्चित् anything न not (अस्ति exists) इव as if शाम्यति finds peace.

17. One who knows for certain that this universe is but an illusion and a nothing, becomes desireless and pure Intelligence, and finds peace as if<sup>1</sup> nothing exists.

[<sup>1</sup> As etc.—See Note 2, Chapter XI, verse 8.]

एकएव भवाम्भोधावासीदस्ति भविष्यति ।

न ते बन्धोऽस्ति मोक्षो वा कृतकृत्यः सुखं चर ॥ १८ ॥

भवाभीषी In the ocean of the world एकः one एव only चासीत् was चक्षि is भविष्यति will be ते your बन्धः bondage मोक्षः liberation वा or न not चक्षि is कृत-  
कृत्यः contented सुखं happily चर move.

18. In the ocean of the world one only was, is and will be. You have neither bondage<sup>1</sup> nor liberation. Live contented<sup>2</sup> and happy.

[<sup>1</sup> *Bondage etc.*—Bondage or freedom is possible only when there are other existences than the Self. But the Self exists for all times in its pristine purity and freedom and it alone is.

<sup>2</sup> *Contented*—One who has all his desires fulfilled, therefore desireless.]

मा सङ्कल्पविकल्पाभ्यां चित्तं क्षोभय चिन्मय ।

उपशम्य सुखं तिष्ठ स्वात्मन्यानन्दविग्रहे ॥ १६ ॥

चिन्मय O pure intelligence संकल्पविकल्पाभ्यां by decisions and indecisions चित्तं mind मा not क्षोभय disturb उपशम्य be calm आनन्दविग्रहे embodiment of bliss स्वात्मनि in your own self सुखं happily तिष्ठ abide.

19. O Pure Intelligence, do not disturb your mind with decisions and indecisions. Be<sup>1</sup> calm and abide happily in your own self which is Bliss itself.

[<sup>1</sup> *Be etc.*—Be free from decisions and indecisions,—such ideas as ‘I shall do this,’ ‘I shall not do this,’ etc.]

त्यजैव ध्यानं सर्वत्र मा किञ्चिद्दृढि धारय ।

आत्मा त्वं मुक्तप्राप्सि किं विमृश्य करिष्यसि ॥ २० ॥

सर्वत्र In everything एव verily ध्यानं thinking त्यज give up दृढि in the heart किञ्चित् anything मा not धारय hold त्वं you आत्मा Self ( ततः therefore ) मुक्तः free एव verily चक्षि are विमृश्य thinking किं what करिष्यसि will do.

20. Give up contemplating anything and hold nothing in your heart. You are verily the Self and therefore free. What<sup>1</sup> will you do by thinking?

[<sup>1</sup> *What etc.*—Being the Self itself and therefore eternally free, there is no need of your thinking of anything, either for attaining freedom or achieving mundane objects.

Ashtavakra instructs the aspirant to dwell in the consciousness of his eternal self.]

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

The present number opens as usual with *Discourses on Jnana Yoga* by SWAMI VIVEKANANDA. . . . Our article, *A Brinjal-seller Appraises a Diamond*, is concluded in this issue. . . . DR. MAHENDRANATH SIRCAR, M.A., Ph.D.

also concludes his *Phases of Immediate Experience* in this issue. . . . SWAMI SATPRAKASHANANDA who is a monk of the Ramakrishna Order, contributes to this number the first instalment of *Swami Brahmananda the Spiritual Son of Sri Ramakrishna*. Swami Brahmananda was second only to Swami Vive-



kananda among the Great Master's disciples. He was one of those very rare souls who come to the earth to bless mankind. Though he did not dwell before the public eye, his influence was nevertheless profound. Our readers, we have no doubt, will find the perusal of the article interesting and profitable. . . . PRAMATHA NATH BOSE, B.Sc. (LONDON) is known to our readers. He contributed a series of very interesting articles to *Prabuddha Bharata* last year on India and many of her problems. He believes the cultural revival of India to be the essential thing. The article that he contributes to the present number, *Revival of Cultural Swaraj: Non-Political Objections*, is a clear answer from his viewpoint to the objections that may be raised against his thesis. . . . *Maya and the March of Freedom* by ROMAIN ROLLAND is the first of a series of articles on the ideas and ideals of Swami Vivekananda to be published serially. In these very interesting essays, our readers will find how the thought of Swami Vivekananda has been reflected on one of the greatest minds of the modern West. . . . We have great pleasure in reproducing a picture of Swami Brahmananda as the frontispiece to this issue.

### INFLUENCE OF INDIAN THOUGHT IN AMERICA

Many of us are vaguely aware that some of the greatest thinkers of the nineteenth century America were profoundly influenced by Indian thought. The name of Emerson prominently occurs to us in this connection. Our readers may remember our Note in pp. 359-360 of the *Prabuddha Bharata* of 1929. But few of us know the exact way in which Indian thought was communicated to Emerson and the other thinkers. We are grateful to M. Romain Rolland for important information on this point. He took great pains to find it out. We shall present our readers with it as published in his *Life of Swami*

*Vivekananda*. The thinkers who were most profoundly influenced were Thoreau and Emerson. But there were also Walt Whitman, Edgar Allan Poe, Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy and others.

Thoreau gives the sources from which he derived Indian influence : a French translation of the *Gita*, whose author must be Burnouf, although he does not mention him, published in 1840, and, more important, the English translation of Charles Wilkins, of which an edition had just appeared in 1846 with a preface by Warren Hastings. By the way, Warren Hastings, though he governed India, submitted to and publicly avowed the spiritual domination of the land of the Vedas. In 1786, he "recommended" a translation of the *Bhagavad Gita* to the President of the East India Company, and wrote a preface to it. He declared that "the writers of the Indian philosophies will survive when the British dominion in India shall long have ceased to exist, and when the sources which it yielded of wealth and power are lost to remembrance. "Thoreau also mentions other Hindu works, such as the *Shakuntala* of Kalidasa, and speaks enthusiastically of Manu, whom he knew through the translations of William Jones.

It appears that in 1854, the Englishman, Thomas Cholmondeley, the nephew of the great Bishop, Reginald Heber, visited Concord and became the friend of the whole intellectual colony. On his return to England, he sent Thoreau a collection of Oriental classics in 44 volumes. Thoreau said that it was practically impossible to find any of these works in America.

As regards Emerson, M. Rolland has given a clear account of his relations with Indian thought in his article published last month by us.

How far was Walt Whitman influenced by Indian thought? No direct connection has yet been discovered between them, though some resemblances may be observed between his thought and Indian thought. It is true in his books he has mentioned Indian terms

on a few occasions (such as "Maya," "avatar," "nirvana," "Brahma," etc.) and designated one of his poems as *Passage to India*, yet when Thoreau asked him about an year after the first publication of his *Leaves of Grass* whether he had read any of the Oriental poems, he replied with a categorical "No." In 1887 Whitman denied that he had read Emerson before 1855. But in 1856 he had written to Emerson that the latter had been the Columbus of the "New Continent" of the soul and Whitman its inspired explorer: "It is you who have discovered these shores. . . ." This at least proves that by that time he was acquainted with the thought of Emerson.

Poe had no less affinity to the spirit of India. His *Eureka*, published in 1848, showed thought closely akin to that of the Upanishads. Some people, such as Waldo Frank, believe that he must in the course of his wanderings have come in contact with Indian mysticism.

The indebtedness of Mrs. Eddy, the founder of Christian Science, can, however, be more clearly proved. It is enough to mention the little lexicon of philosophic and religious terms added by her to her Bible (*Science and Health*) in order to see the likeness of certain of her fundamental ideas to those of Vedanta:

"Me or I. The divine principle. The spirit, the soul . . . Eternal Mind. There is only one ME or US, only one Principle or Mind, which governs all things. . . . Everything reflects or refracts in God's Creation one unique Mind; and everything which does not reflect this unique Mind is false and a cheat. . . ."

"God.—The great I AM. . . . Principle, Spirit, Soul, Life, Truth, love, all substance, intelligence."

It would appear that Mrs. Eddy did not wish to acknowledge their origin. She has been silent on that point in the new editions of her book. But in the first she quoted from Vedantic philosophy. Swami Abhedananda, a dis-

ciple of Sri Ramakrishna, has related that the 24th edition of *Science and Health* contained a chapter, now suppressed, which began with four Vedantic quotations. In the same chapter Mrs. Eddy quoted the *Bhagavad Gita*, from the translation of Charles Wilkins, published in London in 1785 and in New York in 1867. These quotations were later omitted from the book: only one or two veiled allusions can be found to Indian thought. This attempt at dissimulation for the sake of the unwarned reader is a clumsy confession of its importance. (Cf. an article by Madeleine R. Harding, in *Prabuddha Bharata*, March 1928.)

Lastly, analogies to Indian thought are still more striking in the most important treatises on the Mind-cure by Horatio W. Dresser, Henry Wood, and R. W. Trine. But as they date from the end of the century, that is to say, after the death of Swami Vivekananda, they may well have owed much to the teachings of the latter. They agree on all points with the rules of Yogic concentration and with the faith behind it. We have reasons to believe that some at least of the protagonists of Mind-cure and New Thought had attended Vedanta classes. William James said of the Mind-cure: "It is made up of the following elements: the four Gospels, the idealism of Berkeley and Emerson, spiritism with its law of the radical evolution of souls through successive lives, optimistic and vulgar evolutionism, and the religions of India."

We have in the above briefly described the various ways in which Indian thought influenced some of the great American minds. But we must remember one important fact in this connection: there must have existed in the American mind at that time a disposition to accept and appreciate Indian thought. This disposition is nobody's gift, it is the expression of the evolving spirit of the nation. The American mind had reached in course of its history a stage where Indian thought was a desideratum and a necessity, and it came

through the dispensation of Providence and fulfilled it. M. Rolland has shown in his article last month how "the anarchic Brookfarm of George Ripley, the feverish assembly of the *Friends of Universal Progress* at Boston in 1840, brought together in one group men and women of all opinions and professions, all fired with primitive energy, and aspiring to shake off the shackles of past lies *without knowing what truth to adopt.*" (Italics ours). John Morley, in his critical Essay on Emerson, has painted a charming picture of this hour of intellectual intoxication—of this "madness of enthusiasm," as Shaftesbury called it,—which from 1820 to 1848 turned the heads of New England.

From the above, however, it must not be inferred that the necessary articulate, conscious thought could be evolved by the people themselves. The predisposition is there: the desire for a new orientation of thought is no doubt urgent. Yet we may not have it out of ourselves. All the inflammable materials have been brought together. But fire must be procured from elsewhere, at least a spark of it, before we can set them ablaze. Hindu thought implicitly believes in this necessity. It holds that however eager and prepared one may be for receiving or evolving a new vision, it must come from another who already possesses it. The belief is so strong in the Hindu mind that it declares that no one can realise truth without being initiated by another who has already realised it. Without *Guruparamparâ*, succession of *Gurus*, no truth can be realised. This view, though it relates specially to spiritual truths, is also generally true of other truths. In fact it is a view confirmed by repeated experience. Spontaneous realisation of truth, secular or spiritual, is so rare! Even the little things of the material and intellectual world we have to learn with the help of others. Spiritual truths are a thousand times subtler than these. How much more difficult it would be to conceive them independently! If we try sufficiently

and if we can get hold of all the links, we shall more often than not find that our knowledge of truths is *derived* from other sources.

The presence of Indian thought in America is a case to the point. Its preparedness for and predisposition to Indian thought was the evolution of its own mind and nature. But the spark had to come from India before the whole mass of vague emotions and sub-conscious thoughts could be set aflame.

### "THE MISTAKE OF ASCETICISM"

One of the strongest post-war tendencies is the defiance of all authority in every sphere of activity, in family, social and collective life. The love of freedom is being carried to its extreme to the borderland of license. People are up against all discipline, all that requires self-control. All social and traditional principles are being set aside as antiquated conventions and every one is a law unto himself. The natural consequence of this anarchy is everywhere in evidence. Any theory by any man, which panders to the instinct to grow wild, receives warm support, and all principles which have survived the human experience of thousands of years, are washed off.

One of the shibboleths of the modern age is that the attempt at self-control or curbing our senses is unnatural and is but the remnant of mediaeval asceticism. According to this theory, the whole of sexual morality depends on the ascetic notion that certain natural functions are essentially sinful and degrading. This teaching, it is said, has caused incalculable misery, and is now finally antiquated by modern psychology and its kindred sciences. To believe in this theory is to deny the experience of saints and sages in every religion, whose lives had been built on the bedrock of snow-white purity. And to put into practice this new theory means to degrade oneself below the level of a rational human being, instances of which are not rare among the protagonists of this new

gospel. It is true, asceticism in some cases in the past had been carried to most insensible end, but that has not done so much harm to the society as this new tendency.

Dean Inge views with alarm this modern outlook on life and thus writes in a recent issue of *The Forum* :

"I turn to the question of asceticism . . . and I will come to grip with the psycho-analysts and their friends at once. If there were no instincts in our nature which need to be repressed—buffeted, mortified, crucified, as St. Paul says : if all of them are to be gratified, in a more or less 'sublimated' form, then all the great moralists, pagan as well as Christian, Plato as well as St. Paul, are fundamentally wrong. But they are not wrong. The only possible harmony of our nature is a harmony of unified purpose, not of gratified instincts. These instincts are a turbulent mob, which can never be reduced to order except by what the Stoics called the ruling faculty.

"If we were mere animals, we might live as innocently as 'the petty little rabbits with their interesting habits'. But when Judge Ben Lindsey's young students imitate these engaging quadrupeds, the result is revolting and horrible. In becoming moral agents we have forfeited immunity from moral struggle. We can only rise to higher things on stepping stones of our *dead selves*; and a great part of our warfare, though certainly not the whole of it, is concerned with the conquest of what St. Paul calls the flesh. The doctrine of purity is quite clear. The obligation does not rest primarily on the injury which licentiousness does to other people, but on the fact that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, and that misuse of the sacraments of love defiles this inner shrine. If any one thinks that this is mere monkish morality, let him read

what Plato says about the continence of Greek athletes. They do it to obtain a corruptible crown, he says, almost in the words of St. Paul; and shall not we, whose minds are better trained than theirs, and our bodies less lusty, do as much to win the incorruptible crown of self-conquest and converse with the Divine?

"Do not let us talk glibly about the mistake of asceticism. It is a mistake, very often; but it is a mistake which it is much easier to fall below than to rise above."

People who consider continence as self-repression make a great mistake. It is not a case of self-repression, but of self-restraint. Any one who pursues any avocation seriously, must deny some pleasure of life. A votary of the Muse of Learning burns midnight oil and restrains his mind from going after many enjoyments; a business man while bent upon increasing his wealth forgets very often the duties of family life. And why should not a man who is eager to find out the Reality behind the vanishing phenomena of the universe, control himself against the pleasures of sense-objects? And he has not to control his senses forcibly—he has not to suppress them unnaturally, as it is generally thought. His senses become automatically controlled, he finds less and less pleasure in sense-enjoyment as he begins to taste of higher joys. It is said that a man who goes a step towards the east recedes by so much from the west. In the same way the man who goes a step towards God is so much away from earthly joys. The man is kept up in his act of self-conquest by the joy of it and stimulated by the lure of some higher idealism. The Upanishad rightly says : "When a man finds joy, then he controls his senses, and not without getting any joy. It is only on finding joy that he does it."

## REVIEW

**KRISHNA OF VRINDABANA.** By Krishnadas. Bengal Library Book Depot, Calcutta. 601 pp. Price Rs. 6.

The book is an appreciative and faithful exposition of Bengal Vaishnavism, in which Krishna of Brindaban figures as the Supreme God of Love and the central object of worship. It is divided into two parts. The first part narrates the life-story of Krishna up to the slaying of Kamsa. His superhuman exploits and love-pastimes with the *Gopees* are delineated in a chaste language without reservation. Out of the various sources of Krishna's life, the author's account is based chiefly on the *Vishnu-purāna*, the *Bhāgavata* and the *Gopdū-champu*. He has closely followed the texts without making any attempt to avoid or defend what may appear strange or repulsive to modern taste and understanding. With the characteristic humility of a Vaishnava, he has concealed himself under the pseudonym of Krishnadas (servant of Krishna).

The second part deals with the philosophical basis of Krishnaism. It gives all the essentials of the Religion of Love conceived by the Vaishnavas of Bengal. Their views relating to the supreme Godhood of Krishna, his various forms and incarnations, man's eternal relationship with him, the transcendent value of spiritual love, its growth and culmination in the love-life of Brindaban, the super-phenomenal realm of divine love, all have been carefully reproduced by the author from such authoritative works as *Sri-Chaitanya-charitāmrita*, *Ujjvalanilamani* and *Preetisandarbhā*. The abstruse ideas have been elucidated by him with copious foot-notes. One striking feature of the book is adequate reference to alien poetry, philosophy and religion to illustrate and corroborate the thoughts and experiences of the Vaishnava seers. It is interesting to note that there are few such uncommon elements in the Bhakti cult of Bengal, the likeness or semblance of which is not to be found in the mysticism of other lands. The book is closed with some adorations of Krishna by Muhammadan saints. The long appendices, which include among other important subjects the English renderings of Valadeva's Dissertation on Bhakti and Narottamadasa's *Premabhaktichan-*

*drikā*, have increased the value of the book. It will serve as a manual of Bengal Vaishnavism to the English-reading public. It is to be regretted that the book contains no index, which would have made it more useful to the readers. In spite of neatness of printing, the book is not free from typographical errors.

One notable feature of the Bengal School of Vaishnavism is its attempt to make a synthesis of the *Nirguna* (impersonal) and the *Saguna* (personal) aspects of Brahman. Like Ramanuja it does not explain the *Nirguna* as 'devoid of unworthy virtues' to thus identify it with the *Saguna*, but gives it a distinct place in the life of realisation. The three modes of spiritual practices, *Jñāna*, *Yoga* and *Bhakti* reveal the Supreme Being as Brahman (Impersonal Spirit), *Paramātmān* (Supreme Soul) and *Bhagavān* (God of Love) respectively. The knowledge of Brahman is a simple apprehension of the outer expression of the Divine Personality, when His infinite beauty, love and sweetness are not clearly manifest. Love alone can realise Him in His concrete fulness. But it should be noted that the Vaishnavic conception of Brahman differs essentially from that of the Advaitists. Samkara's Brahman is one homogeneous whole. It transcends all relativistic consciousness, while the Brahman of the Vaishnavas is the substratum of endless beauties, virtues and powers. The indeterminate knowledge of Brahman has even been discarded by the Vaishnava philosophers as fraught with pain. "Even in the *sāyujya*-salvation (absorption into the Divine Principle), owing to the complete absence of pain, joy must, too, be experienced as pain." This view of the *Ujjvalanilamani* reproduced by the author seems to contradict itself. Pain and pleasure are interdependent in relative plane, but not in the transcendence of absolute bliss. It is also argued that *Brahmānanda* amounts to non-existence, as no joy is possible without the differentiations of knower, knowledge and knowable. But Samkara's Brahman which is the identity of consciousness and bliss, is perfectly real to itself.

The basic difference between the Advaitists and the Vaishnavites lies in their attitudes of consciousness. The attitudes of know-

ledge and love have naturally given rise to two distinct types of philosophical thinking and concepts. Metaphysically, the disagreement between the two schools consists in their assertions of identity and difference between substance and attributes. In Samkara's Absolute all attributes have resolved themselves into substance. They appear in our empiric consciousness, but have no existence in the transcendence of Pure Knowledge. The Vaishnavas also do not maintain an absolute separateness between substance and attributes. Though distinct, they are non-different. The attributes inhere in the integrity of being. Jeeva Goswami has instituted a relation with essence (*svarupa-sambandha*) to maintain the identity. But the relation cannot logically establish the co-existence of difference and non-difference, which contradict one another. If it is inconceivable (*achintya*), 'it must be either non-existent or indefinable (*anirvachaniya*).

**MYSTICISM IN BHAGAVAT GITA.** *By Mahendranath Sircar, M.A., Ph.D. Longmans Green & Co. Ltd., Calcutta. xix+219 pp. Price Rs. 5/-.*

We are glad to observe that Hindu Mysticism has found a worthy exponent in Dr. Sircar. His deep understanding and appreciation of the religious ideals of the Vedanta, evinced in his two earlier works dealing with its different philosophical aspects, were clear evidences of his ability to deal with its mystical aspect with equal success. With the revival of the religious thought in the West, mysticism has been a subject of absorbing interest, and the mysticism of Christianity has engaged the attention of many profound thinkers in the field of religion. But no attempt worth the name, with the single exception of *Hindu Mysticism* by Dr. Surendranath Das Gupta, has yet been made to represent the mysticism of the Vedantic Religion. Dr. Sircar's *Mysticism in Bhagavat Gita* is an excellent promise in this direction. He has brought to bear upon the subject his wide study of the mysticism of the West. Certain striking resemblances in the mystical ideas of the East and the West have also been noticed by him. He has brought the subject in line with the modern way of thinking.

The author has treated the subject under the following heads: (1) the philosophical tendencies, (2) the descent of the soul,

(3) the ascent of the soul, and (4) the spiritual fulfilment. The distinctive feature of the mysticism of the Gita is its synthetic presentment of all the phases of mystic life, philosophic, devotional and contemplative in their concrete adaptation to life. "The Gita appeals by the presentation of all the phases of mystic life in its concreteness and shows clearly how in every turn, life dwells in its habitual plane and yet soars into the expanse. The end of mysticism is not only to give a glimpse of truth, but also to effect a transformation of the individual to make him a fit vehicle for the transmission of divine life. The Gita aims at the realisation of this concrete divine life in every finite being. He must be moved by the oscillations of the cosmic life. The direct aim is to break through the sense of limitations and to open the floodgate of divine life and energy to the fit enabling them to shape the world-process to cosmic ends. The Gita links the silence of transcendence to the active stirrings of life. It is a departure from the ancient mysticism of the Upanishads, and in this it has its own problem."

The author appears to have considered the mystical discipline of the Gita from the standpoint of monistic theism. As such, its devotional aspect has been treated in full length. The methods of reflection and discrimination have received much less attention. *Saranâpatti* (resignation) has been described as the last resort of the seeking soul for the realisation of the Divinity. The fruition of the spiritual life is not possible without grace. This view holds good, so far as the path of *Upâsanâ*, the meditation of the Personal God, is concerned. This is, no doubt, the outstanding mystical ideal of the Gita. But the Gita also inculcates, for those who are fit, the reflection of *Nirguna Brahman*, the Impersonal Being, as the direct method of attaining the ultimate stage of transcendence. In this the self realises the Self and there is no scope of grace. Though the Lord holds out to Arjuna the concrete spiritual life, he also advocates the mystic calm free from all active stirrings of life.

The book is nicely printed and got up. There is a synopsis at the head of each chapter. It contains a short glossary but no index or contents. The author's style is as fascinating as expressive. He has a wonderful power to delineate the subtlest spiritual ideas and ideals in a sweet, graphic and dignified language. The writing is

characterised by the depth and the sublimity of a sermon.

**POTTER'S CLAY.** By *Hilton Brown*. *Ganesh & Co., Madras.* 191 pp. Price Re. 1-8. A collection of stories beautifully written and nicely printed.

(1) **VACCINATION AND SMALL-POX.**  
(2) **RIGHT KNOWLEDGE FOR HEALTH-SEEKERS.** By *K. L. Sarma, B.A., B.L.* *The Nature-Cure Publishing House, Pudukotah, S. I. Ry.* Price. As. 2 each.

**ARA-NOOL OR DHARMA.** By *Swami Shuddhananda Bharati.* Published by the same.

**INDIA'S RELIGIOUS QUESTIONS.** By *Rev. J. W. R. Netram.* Published by the *Christian Literature Society for India, Madras.* 95 pp. Price As. 12.

**ONENESS WITH GOD.** By *L. P. Larsen.* Published by the same. 72 pp. Price As. 5. Studies from Christian standpoint.

**UPADESA SARAM.** Published by *Sri Ramaniyavuni Pusthakalayam, Tiruvannamalai, S. India.* Price As. 4. Teachings of a living Hindu saint, Sri Ramana Maharshigal of Tiruvannamalai, in English, Tamil and Sanskrit.

**MY LISPINGS.** By *N. S. Chetty.* To be had of the author, *Tata Construction Co. Ltd., Phoenix Building, Ballard Estate, Bombay.* Attempts at versification in English.

**MOTHER AMERICA.** By *Swami Omkar.* Published by *Ganesh & Co., Madras.* 75 pp. An expression of commendable and noble feelings that stirred within the bosom of the author as a reaction to his study of Miss Mayo's *Mother India.*

**SOBS AND THROBS.** By *Abdul Kareem Abdullah.* To be had of the author, *C/o. Meher Rice & Flour Mill, Talegaon Dabhade, Dt. Poona, Bombay.* 169 pp. Contains interesting information about Meher Baba and his disciples.

(1) **HOW THEOSOPHY CAME TO ME.** By *C. W. Leadbeater.* (2) **FIRST STEPS ON THE PATH.** By *G. Hodson.* (3) **THE WORK OF THE RULER AND THE TEACHER.** By *Annie Besant.* (4) **KRISHNAMURTI'S MESSAGE.** By *C. Jinarajadasa.* (5) **KARMA ONCE MORE.**

By *Annie Besant.* *Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras.*

All Theosophical writings.

**GANDHI DIAMOND JUBILEE NUMBER.** Published by *S. Ganesan, Madras.* Price Re. 1. Contains many interesting writings on and by Mahatmaji, and also innumerable pictures of him, his activities and those connected with him. Every admirer of Mahatmaji will appreciate this publication.

**STUDENT LIFE IN MUNICH.** Published by the *Foreign Students' Bureau in Munich, Germany.* The booklet is a guide-book for foreign students, giving accounts of various educational and cultural institutions in Munich. Illustrated.

**PRACTICE OF YOGA.** By *Swami Sivananda of Ram Ashram, Rishikesh, Himalayas.* *Ganesh & Co., Madras.* 247 pp. Price Rs. 2. Contains many interesting observations on the theory and practice of Yoga.

**THE PSYCHOLOGY AND STRATEGY OF GANDHI'S NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE.** By *Richard B. Gregg.* *S. Ganesan, Triplicane, Madras.* 169 pp. Attempts to prove that non-violence is "a new and better weapon of war."

**BEHOLD THE MAN.** By *Prof. Dwijadas Datta, M.A., A.R.A.C. (Cirencester).* To be had of *Babu Ganesh Prosad, 84, Upper Circular Road, Calcutta.* 289 pp. Price Re. 1-8. Attempts at vindicating Keshab Ch. Sen against the charges brought against him by Sadharan Brahma Samaj.

**UNTO THIS FIRST OR THE ETERNAL IDEAL.** By *Sri Mitra.* *The Satyen Library, 10, Bangla Bazar, Dacca, Bengal.* 112 pp. Price As. 12. A dead-set against much of what is considered modernism. The booklet is the first of the "Shun-Science Series." Contains lots of quotations from various sources.

**VIVEKANANDA-VANI.** By *Amarendra-nath Roy.* *Aryan Library, 204, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta.* 99 pp. Price As. 12. A Bengali essay delineating the development of patriotism in Bengali literature.

**BHAGAVATA DHARMA.** By *Abanimo-han Batubyal.* To be had of the author, *Gandaria, P.O. Faridabad, Dacca.* 84 pp. Price As. 8. Contains selections of Sanskrit utterances from various scriptural sources, with Bengali translations, bearing on the religion of renunciation. A fine little collection, nicely printed.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### KUMBHA MELA AT KAILAS AND MANASAROWAR

Swami Anubhavananda, Ramakrishna Tapovan, P.O. Dharchula, Dt. Almora, U.P., has sent us the following appeal for publication :

I take this opportunity to inform the generous public that Purna Kumbha Mela will be held at the Holy Shri Kailas this year in July, 1930. It is therefore expected that many hundreds of Mahatmas, Sadhus, Sannyasins and other pilgrims from far and near will visit the holy place on this auspicious occasion. The Mela continues for about two months. It is not unknown that Shri Kailas is not only not easily accessible, but it is very difficult for pilgrims to prolong their stay at such an altitude on perpetual snow. The pilgrims have to travel hundreds of miles in difficult paths on snow and eternally snow-clad hills and narrow paths at a good height of about eighteen to twenty thousand feet before they can reach their destination.

I have a personal knowledge of the difficulties and hardships enumerated above of the pilgrims to Holy Shri Kailas, because I have been myself to the holy place twice. Also as Ramakrishna Tapovan is situated on the way to Shri Kailas, I have been observing all these half a dozen years the difficulties, inconveniences, and hardships of the pilgrims on the way. I may say that they perform the journeys sometimes at the risk of their lives owing to illness and fatigue. It is therefore human to say that any and every kind of help is welcomed by them at such a time. It can hardly be said now what form of relief or aid may be necessary to the pilgrims, but to name a few, they are woollen clothings, food-stuffs, conveyances and medical relief. With the co-operation of the munificent public, I hope to open a Chhatra and a camp of medical relief with the aid of a trained and qualified doctor and good unselfish workers for the pilgrims who travel to and from Holy Shri Kailas on this occasion, and also give them such other help and relief as will be at the time found necessary. From the Chhatra atta, rice, ghee, dal and potatoes will be doled out to the needy and deserving pilgrims ; in the medical camp, pilgrims who fall ill

will be treated both in allopathy and homeopathy.

Should you think that the cause is worthy of your support, I appeal to you, the generous and charitable-minded ladies and gentlemen, to donate and contribute liberally. Contributions and donations, however small, either in coin or kind, will be thankfully accepted by me.

### VEDANTA CENTRE, PORTLAND, U.S.A.

The Birthday of Sri Ramakrishna was duly celebrated on March 9th, by the Vedanta Society of Portland, Oregon, U.S.A.

At eleven o'clock in the morning the students gathered at the Vedanta Chapel, which had been beautifully decorated with choicest flowers, to pay homage to the Great Master.

Amidst the strains of soft music and fragrance of flowers, plus the inspiring aroma of incense,—each one contributed to the occasion,—either with song, speech, or silence, all alike entering heartily into the spirit of the hour.

In the evening Swami Vividishananda gave a most impressive lecture upon the Life and Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. After the lecture, light refreshments were served, when all departed to their homes, taking with them the blessing of Sri Ramakrishna.

### VEDANTA CENTRE, SAN FRANCISCO

The sixty-eighth Birthday Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated at the Hindu Temple, headquarters of the Vedanta Society of San Francisco, California, U.S.A., on January 19th, 1930.

The Auditorium was beautifully decorated to suit the occasion. The large picture of Swami Vivekananda, which hangs on the side of the speaker's platform, was tastefully decorated with flowers and illumined with lights, the whole effect being both pleasing and inspiring.

The morning service was conducted by Swami Dayananda. The subject of his lecture was "Swami Vivekananda, the Greatest Figure in Chicago Parliament of Religions."



The Swami spoke both at length and feelingly of Swamiji's coming to America and the great spiritual message he brought to the Western world.

The service was attended by a large and appreciative audience.

Music fitting the occasion, both vocal and instrumental, was rendered by the students. In the evening, the service opened with chanting by Swami Dayananda, after which four students whose blessed privilege it had been to hear and also come into personal contact with Swamiji when he was in California in 1900, told of the different experiences they had had with the Swamiji and of his wonderful personality.

All testified that their viewpoint of life had been entirely changed. In some the walls of agnosticism had crumbled away before the convincing truths of Vedanta given forth by this great Teacher. Others felt that they had found the result of their years of searching for Truth.

Some students told anecdotes of their experiences with Swamiji, which were interesting and gave a glimpse into the more personal life of Swamiji.

After the discourses, *Prasāda* was distributed to all present.

The celebration was well attended, and there was indeed an atmosphere of harmony, peace and goodwill to all. The service was a great success. All were happy.

On the following two Sundays also Swami Dayananda spoke beautifully on "Swami Vivekananda and Regeneration of India."

#### A NEW VEDANTA CENTER IN HOLLYWOOD, U.S.A.

It was sometime in August, 1928, Swami Prabhavananda came from Portland to give a series of lectures to the students and friends in Los Angeles. Two sisters from Hollywood, disciples of the Swami Vivekananda, happened to be in the crowd that attended the Swami's lectures. One of the sisters had a home in Hollywood which she offered for a permanent home for the Vedanta work. Since then many old students of Swamiji and new friends around Hollywood and vicinity had been urging Swami Prabhavananda to come down to Hollywood and open a Vedanta Center here. But the Swami found no way to accept the

offer until another Swami came from India to take charge of the Vedanta work in Portland.

Swami Vividishananda was sent from India to assist Swami Prabhavananda in Portland. As soon as the new Swami was ready, he was given the charge of the work in Portland and Swami Prabhavananda came down to Hollywood to take up new and greater responsibilities. In February of this year Swami began a course of lectures in Hollywood. The lectures were well attended and some of the best minds of Hollywood got newly interested and enthused over the pure teachings of Vedanta. At the end of the course, the Vedanta Society of Hollywood was organized.

Regular Sunday services are held in a rented hall, located in Hollywood Boulevard. The large hall is crowded to capacity. The regular week-day classes on the Gita and Yoga Aphorisms are held at the Vivekananda Home, 1946 Ivar Avenue, Hollywood, which is a permanent home of the Ramakrishna Order.

The little modest home is situated on a large plot of land, thickly planted with an exquisitely beautiful garden. It is very centrally located, ten minutes' walk up the hill from the main Hollywood Boulevard. The home has a touch of Oriental architecture and the whole surrounding gives the peaceful atmosphere of a Temple and an Ashrama.

The Home was dedicated on Sri Ramakrishna's Birthday Anniversary.

Another branch center has been opened in Alhambra, California, where Swami Prabhavananda holds a regular week-day class on the Bhagavad Gita, which is very well attended.

Swami Prabhavananda was invited to address the members of the Psychology section of the Ebell Club, which is a cultural society for the women, and is said to be the largest club of women in the United States of America. The President of the Psychology section of the Club, who is also a devoted student of Vedanta, introduced the Swami in a neat little speech. Swami's lecture on Indian Psychology was well received, and the Swami was given an enthusiastic ovation.

The far-reaching effect of this lecture before the very cultured women of Southern California, cannot yet be gauged.

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

## DISCOURSES ON JNANA YOGA

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

The Self is the condition of all in the universe, but It can never be conditioned. As soon as we *know* that we are It, we are free. As mortals we are not and never can be free. Free mortality is a contradiction in terms, for mortality implies change and only the changeless can be free. The Atman alone is free, and that is our real essence. We feel this inner freedom; in spite of all theories, all beliefs we know it, and every action proves that we know it. The will is not free, its apparent freedom is but a reflection from the Real. If the world were only an endless chain of cause and effect, where could one stand to help it? There must needs be a piece of dry land for the rescuer to stand on, else how can he drag anyone out of the rushing stream and save him from drowning? Even the fanatic who cries “I am a worm,” thinks that he is on the way to become a saint. He sees the saint even in the worm.

There are two ends or aims of human life, real knowing (Vijnāna) and bliss. Without freedom, these two are impossible. They are the touchstone of all life. We should feel the Eternal Unity so much, that we should weep for all

sinners, knowing that it is *we* who are sinning. The eternal law is self-sacrifice, not self-assertion. What self to assert, when all is One? There are no “rights”, all is love. The great truths that Jesus taught have never been lived. Let us try his method and see if the world will not be saved. The contrary method has nearly destroyed it. Selflessness only, not selfishness, can solve the question. The idea of “right” is a limitation; there is *really* no “mine,” and “thine,” for I am thou and thou art I. We have “responsibility”, not “rights”. We should say : “I am the Universe,” not “I am John,” or “I am Mary.” These limitations are all delusions and are what holds us in bondage, for as soon as I think : “I am John,” I want exclusive possession of certain things and begin to say “me” and “mine”, and continually make new distinctions in so doing. So our bondage goes on increasing with every fresh distinction and we get farther and farther away from the central Unity, the undivided Infinite. There is only one Individual, and each of us is That. Oneness alone is love and fearlessness, separation leads us to hatred and fear. One-

ness fulfils the law. Here, on earth, we strive to enclose little spaces and exclude outsiders, but we cannot do that in the sky, though that is what sectarian religion tries to do, when it says : "Only *this* way leads to salvation, all others are wrong." Our aim should be to wipe out these little enclosures to widen the boundaries until they are lost sight of, and to realize that *all* religions lead to God. This little puny self must be sacrificed. This is the truth symbolized by baptism into a new life, the death of the old man—the birth of the new, the perishing of the false self, the realization of the Atman, the one Self of the Universe.

The two great divisions of the Vedas are Karma Kānda—the portion pertaining to doing or work, and Jñāna Kānda—the portion treating of knowing—true knowledge. In the Vedas, we can find the whole process of the growth of religious ideas. This is because when a higher truth was reached, the lower perception that led to it, was still preserved. This was done, because the sages realized that the world of creation being eternal, there would always be those who needed the first steps to Knowledge, that the highest philosophy, while open to all, could never be grasped by all. In nearly every other religion, only the last or highest realization of truth was preserved, with a natural consequence that the older ideas were lost, while the newer ones were only understood by the few and gradually came to have no meaning for the many. We see this result illustrated in the growing revolt against old traditions and authorities. Instead of accepting them, the man of to-day boldly challenges them to give reasons for their claims, to make clear the grounds upon which they demand acceptance. Much in Christianity is the mere application of new names and meanings to old pagan beliefs and customs. If the old sources had been preserved and the reasons for the transitions fully explained, many things would be clearer. The Vedas preserved the old ideas and this fact necessitated huge commentaries to

explain them and why they were kept. It also led to many superstitions, through clinging to old forms after all sense of their meaning had been lost. In many ceremonials, words are repeated, which have survived from a now forgotten language and to which no real meaning can now be attached. The idea of evolution was to be found in the Vedas long before the Christian era, but until Darwin said it was true, it was regarded as a mere Hindu superstition.

All external forms of prayer and worship are included in the Karma Kānda. These are good when performed in a spirit of unselfishness and not allowed to degenerate into mere formality. They purify the heart. The Karma Yogi wants everyone to be saved before himself. His only salvation is to help others to salvation. "To serve Krishna's servants is the highest worship." One great saint prayed : "Let me go to hell with the sins of the whole world, but let the world be saved." This true worship leads to intense self-sacrifice. It is told of one sage that he was willing to give all his virtues to his dog, that he might go to heaven, because he had long been faithful to him, while the sage himself was content to go to hell.

The Jñāna Kānda teaches that Knowledge alone can save, in other words, that he must become "wise unto salvation." Knowledge is first objective, the Knower knowing Himself. The Self, the only subject, is in manifestation seeking only to know Himself. The better the mirror, the better reflection it can give ; so man is the best mirror, and the purer the man, the more clearly he can reflect God. Man makes the mistake of separating himself from God and identifying himself with the body. This mistake arises through Mâyâ, which is not exactly delusion but might be said to be seeing the real as something else and not as it is. This identifying of ourselves with the body leads to inequality, which inevitably leads to struggle and jealousy, and as long as we see inequality, we can never know happiness. "Ignorance and inequality are the two sources of all

misery," says Jnâna. When man has been sufficiently buffeted by the world, he awakes to a desire for freedom, and searching for means of escape from the dreary round of earthly existence, he seeks Knowledge, learns what he really is, and is free. After that he looks at the world as a huge machine, but takes good care to keep his fingers out of the wheels. Duty ceases for him who is free; what power can constrain the free being? He does good, because it is his nature, not because any fancied duty commands it. This does not apply to those who are still in the bondage of the senses. Only for him who has transcended the lower self, is this freedom. He stands on his own soul, obeys no law; he is free and perfect. He has undone the old superstitions and got out of the wheel. Nature is but the mirror of our own selves. There is a limit to the working power of human beings, but no limit to desire, so we strive to get hold of the working powers of others and enjoy the fruits of their labours, escaping work ourselves. Inventing machinery to work for us, can never increase well-being, for in gratifying desire, we only find it, and then we ask more and more, without end. Dying, still filled with ungratified desires, we have to be born again and again in the vain search for satisfaction. "Eight millions of bodies have we had, before we reach the human," say the Hindus. Jnâna says: "Kill desire and so get rid of it." That is the only way. Cast out all causation and realize the Atman. Only freedom can produce true morality. If there were only an endless chain of cause and effect, Nirvâna could not be. It is extinction of the seeming self, bound by this chain. That is what constitutes freedom, to get beyond causality. Our true nature is good, it is free, the pure being that can never be, or do, wrong. When we read God with our eyes and minds, we call Him this or that, but in reality there is but One, all variations are our interpretations of that One. We *become* nothing, we *regain* our true Self. Buddha's summary of misery as the outcome of "ig-

norance and caste" (inequality) has been adopted by the Vedântists, because it is the best ever made and manifests the wonderful insight of this greatest among men. Let us be brave and sincere then—whatever path we follow with devotion, we must reach freedom. Once lay hold of one link of the chain and the whole must come after it by degrees. Water the root of the tree and the whole tree is watered. It is of little advantage to waste time to water each leaf. In other words, seek the Lord and getting Him we get all. Churches, doctrines, forms—these are merely the hedges to protect the tender plant of religion; but later on they must all be broken down, that the little plant may become a tree. So the various religious sects, Bibles, Vedas and Scriptures are just "tubs" for the little plant, but it has to get out of the tub and fill the world.

We must learn to feel ourselves as much in the sun, in the stars, as here. Spirit is beyond all time and space; every eye seeing, is my eye; every mouth praising the Lord, is my mouth; every sinner is I. We are confined nowhere, we are not body. The universe is our body. We are just the pure crystal, reflecting all, but itself ever the same. We are magicians waving magic wands and creating scenes before us at will, but we have to go below appearances and know the Self. This world is like water in a kettle, beginning to boil; first a bubble comes, then another, then many, until all is in ebullition and passes away in steam. The great teachers are like the bubbles as they begin, here one, there one, but in the end every creature has to be a bubble and escape. Creation, ever new, will bring new water and go through the process all over again. Buddha and Christ are the two greatest "bubbles" the world has known. They were great souls, who having realized freedom help others to escape. Neither was perfect, but they are to be judged by their virtues, never by their defects. Jesus fell short, because he did not always

live up to his own highest ideal, and above all, because he did not give woman an equal place with man. Woman did everything for him, yet not one was made an apostle. This was doubtless owing to his Semitic origin. The great

Aryans, Buddha among the rest, have always put woman in an equal position with man. For them sex in religion did not exist. In the Vedas and Upanishads, women taught the highest truths and received the same veneration as men.

## A MESSENGER OF THE BELOVED

BY SWAMI VIJAYANANDA

A little bird singing from a neighbouring tree suddenly shattered my dream. . . . It was a beautiful May morning in the Himalayas. I was watching in amazed fascination the magic play of sunshine on a little cluster of white clouds hovering over the majestic snow-peaks. Such a vast and extensive range of snows is seldom seen anywhere. Over six hundred miles long! The divine *Nandâ Devi* towering majestic above the clouds with its sky-kissing domes, the *Trisul* resplendent like a shining silver pyramid, and many other peaks of varied forms and shapes,—how sublime they looked as they shone in infinite tints, now violet, now pink and again crimson! And lo, in a moment the northern sky is flooded with the purest gold! A vision of beauty, so grand, so sublime! And yet men complain that there is no joy, glory or inspiration on this earth! They say the world is old, stale and monotonous. People, devoid of imagination and inspiration, do of course produce dull works from their pen, brush or chisel. But there are others who have revealed delicate secrets of beauty and command eternal homage from mankind. And that master artist, God, who in a twinkle of an eye creates such wonders out of himself,—to call his works dull and insipid, is not that the height of blasphemy? Some say that the author of this creation is God, others that it is mere Nature. But why worry so long as you have these beauties of colour and form spread before you on which to feast your soul? This ambrosial feast—

There! the bird is piping forth its shrill, penetrating cry: "Oh you, what are you doing?"\* So shrill is the song that the hills are echoing it. The whole place is filled with its vibrant notes. The magic colours on the snows and the sky are vanishing away. The shining peaks are enveloped in thick vapours. I start up. My mind is suddenly withdrawn from the feast of nature, and eagerly seeks for a suitable reply to the imperious call.

What am I doing indeed? Is it any good flying on the wings of imagination, forgetting the stern realities of life, the call of duties, the pangs of the soul's imperfections and the thousand shadows that momentarily darken its shining calm, and also, alas, the Face of the Beloved waiting in the inmost heart for my coming,—him, my friend, my lord, my all in all? Only a moment ago, my soul was enjoying the delicious cup brewed from the multicoloured charms of the world. But now it lies empty and broken on the ground. Fallen from the summit of joy, I lie in the slough of despondency.

Yes, my friend, I am doing nothing. I am averse to my Beloved. I have not yet curbed my wayward ego and laid it at his feet. He, my Beloved, masquerading in variegated forms in men and animals and in other infinite guises, has not received my loving homage and service. I have forgotten myself. The

\* A summer bird in the Himalayas, that seems to sing the exact Bengali words, *Tumi kee kachcho goh*, which mean in English, *Oh, what are you doing?*

external has lured me away by its siren charms, and all the while my Lord has been waiting, waiting in the inner shrine. I have been a victim of the senses. Oh, what indeed am I doing?

The bird is calling insistently : "What are you doing?" "What are you doing?" Is it the messenger of my Beloved? Of my jealous Lord who would not brook a single look or heart-beat wasted on any other? Has the bird come from him to see what I am doing? Whether I am a tireless pilgrim on the way to his temple? Did he say when he sent his messenger : "Go and see why he tarries so long and keeps me waiting. Ask of his eyes if he remembers me, of his heart-throbs if he hears my footfalls, and of his breath if he sees my face"? The bird has found me betraying his sacred trust, and is piping out its shrill protest in an unceasing cry—"Oh, what are you doing?" "Oh, what are you doing?"

Friends, such is the infinite grace of my Beloved. He has not forgotten me, though I forgot him. When oblivion blinds the soul and leads it astray, he in his infinite mercy sends his emissaries to enquire after us, to guide us through the dark alleys and intricacies of life. He is ever drawing us towards him, towards his eternal joy and peace. His messengers are everywhere. Every movement in nature is an eager call from his dear lips to hasten our steps towards him. Could we but see and hear! Would not then nature herself keep company with us in our love-tryst with him? And there would be no blunder, no tears, no heart-breaking and no separation.

As it is, we are like parrots imprisoned within the cage of nature. The encaged parrot forgets its pristine nature and the memory of the wild delights of free wings and boundless azure. The rays creeping through its prison bars cloud the joyous affluence of the golden morning. Freedom no more whispers in its ears the rustles of the green leaves. Forgetting its native song, it only mimics the alien voice of its captor. It is a slave, cramped and cribbed.

The bondman, imprisoned within the dull senses and the blind passions and desires, has been reduced to the state of the caged parrot. All his thoughts are concentrated on his little self. Noble aspirations have forsaken him. He craves only for the superficial and mistakes tinsel for gold. He has shut himself within the walls of meanness, jealousy, hatred, greed and lust. Better instincts do not find play in his soul. He has strangled his conscience, his noblest helpmate. He sits in the dark corners of his cage, broken-hearted and bereft of his native effulgence. His powers are gone, and hope and faith no more animate him. Good appears as evil to his distorted vision, the real as unreal and the transient as eternal. Good counsels do not prevail with him. The call of freedom does not reach his ears, and his blinded vision cannot see the far-off beckonings of the eternal. To his embittered soul everything is gall and wormwood. And the anxious footsteps of the Beloved sound in vain before the portals of his soul.

Such alas, we are, bound and shackled and blind!

But let us not lose heart. For hark, the bird is again singing merrily—"What are you doing?" The Lord has not forsaken us. His ever-awake love is watching over us. And anon his light shall shine. Do not his encircling arms ever protect us from eternal ruin? Through darkness and despair the song of his flute is cheering us on to where he waits for us. And his messengers ever call the hour of the tryst—"Oh, what are you doing? Adorn yourself for the coming of the eternal Bridegroom. For the hour is nigh and the air is thick with his perfume. Come out under the open sky and surrender yourself to his golden smile."

I have come out. The bird sings its merry song. A new light kisses my eyes, and a new delight fills my soul. I hear his oncoming footfalls. The shackles fall off. And behold the snows are again aglow with a celestial light, and the sky is echoing their glad laughter. The

trees nod their heads in glee, and the flowers look at me with wide-eyed approval. Yea, the earth is again

suffused with the light of heaven, and there is no separation between myself and him !

## A REVIEW AND A FORECAST

By THE EDITOR

It is obvious that religion is in a state of embarrassment and confusion in the modern world,—a fact which no one interested in religion can look on with indifference. Whether people as a whole are lacking in religious spirit or not, it is difficult to say, but that religion as it exists to-day has lost its hold on the minds of men, no one can deny. There is not only a general apathy to religion, but a direct antagonism against it. Persistent efforts are being made in some parts of the world to cure men of God and religion. Religion originates in fear, they say. It makes man a toy in the hands of an imaginary invisible power. It blurs his vision of life, makes him dreamy and stifles his creative impulse. It breeds superstition and engenders narrowness and intolerance. It has torn humanity into contending factions. Bloody wars and persecutions have ensued from religious animosity and bigotry.

Religion no longer wields the power that it once exercised over society and state. Time was when social rules were framed by the religious, when priests dictated duties to the king, when educational institutions were conducted by monks and educational systems were based on religious ideals. From this central position of social and political authority religion has been completely overthrown in recent years. The history of the modern age is to a great extent the history of men's efforts to free themselves from the bondage of religion. Man's thought and conduct are no longer subject to the bindings of religion. The modern spirit to shake off the authority of religion has asserted itself not only in 'progressive' Christian

lands, but also in Muhammadan countries. In many countries religion seems to live in exile like a dethroned king with a few faltering adherents.

### II

It cannot be denied, however, that the revolt against religion is partly reactionary in character. Human nature has rebelled against undue restraint put on man's free will by religious zealots. Not long ago, even in America, apparently the most modern of all countries, man's public and private morals were scrupulously watched by the clergy and the slightest dereliction brought upon even the unwitting offender the severest wrath of the church dignitaries. These were, of course, extreme cases. Religionists, as a general rule, tried to curb man's impulses and desires by the strict enforcement of prohibitive measures. But man's natural inclinations are neither to be suppressed nor to be killed out. They are to be transformed. Inhibition results mostly in violent reaction or dull morbidity. Desires, by themselves, are neither good nor bad. They are colourless. They are good or evil according to the motive behind them. Broadly speaking, man is divided into two selves, the lower self and the higher self, the natural self and the spiritual self. Between these two flows the stream of consciousness. When it turns to the natural self, the will that proceeds therefrom exhibits itself as animal propensities, such as lust, anger and jealousy. The same will, when it arises from the spiritual consciousness, manifests itself as divine virtues, such as love, devotion and sacrifice. The spiritual self of man is his real self. As he becomes conscious

of this, he attains self-possession. His reason awakes, for reason is a function of the higher consciousness. He gains true discrimination. His will becomes subservient to himself. He can choose rightly and act rightly. His physical and mental selves are then instruments at his hands. He can direct them and guide them to higher and greater ends. This is what is meant by self-control, the control of the lower self by the higher self. But the church, instead of establishing man in this self-mastery, tried to make him only a bondsman to external rules and discipline. Ethical rules in order to be effective must be creative in force. They should awaken in man a higher vision of life and soul, fill him with a deeper sense of responsibility and inspire him with nobler aims. They should not prevail simply as protective or prohibitive measures.

That people got tired of the authority exercised over them by religion is true. But that is not the only cause of discontent. They lost faith in religion itself. An intellectual dissatisfaction has long come over men. With the growth of scientific spirit, human knowledge has been derived mainly from experience backed by reason. Experience and reason present to us the empiric reality, the relative truths. But religion has for its special province the truths which are beyond normal perception. They are revealed only to the supersensuous vision of the seers, who are few and far between. The rest of men have necessarily to depend on the authority of the revelations or the Sacred Texts, and follow the course of action laid by them until they can realise the truths for themselves. In spiritual matters, which are beyond common experience the scriptures are therefore held to be the only infallible source of knowledge. Thus in religious conceptions and practice faith occupies the first place. But though perception and reason cannot lead us to the transcendental reality, still it is not contradictory to them. We cannot deny the authority of the revealed truths, but can explain them

in the light of reason. Our faith in them can be well grounded on reason. But few have the inclination or capacity to do that. With the generality of people religion has remained a matter of belief, which has naturally suffered a rude shock from the materialistic and the rationalistic tendencies of the age.

Religious truths have been so differently formulated to suit different mental constitutions that it is sometimes extremely difficult to find any rational basis underlying them. Even those who intuitively perceive the spiritual truths, may not have their reasoning faculty so highly developed as to convince others by arguments of the validity of their experiences. This is why the *Upanishads* say that a spiritual leader should not only be steadfast in *Brahman* but versed in the dialectics of the *Shāstras*. On the other hand, there are few seekers who have the adequate reasoning power to understand the rationale of the spiritual truths. The arguments concerning them are mainly based on psychic facts and cannot be followed without sufficient power of introspection. Hence the extrovert scientific mind cannot possibly enter into them. Then again the same reasoning process does not appeal to all. Another reason why the arguments given by the *Shāstras* do not appeal to the scientific minds is that they have explained the religious truths from the standpoint of popular knowledge, which do not generally conform to the scientific view, for their object was to convey to common people religious ideas which they could best understand from their own standpoint. Moreover, different persons have realised the Truth in different ways. The truths stated by them naturally differ from one another. Few only have a full vision of the Reality. Only they have the highest view-point which can harmonise all. The disagreements of religious views are another stumbling-block to the acceptance of religion by the common reason of men.

Man's power and prosperity incident to the progress of science are also res-



possible for the decline of religious feeling. The worldly attainments and the emergence of fresh powers to achieve more have opened before men vistas of infinite progress. His desires for sense-enjoyment have increased thousandfold. He is earth-bound. He revels in his material glory. But man's longing for the Eternal cannot grow out of such self-sufficiency. He must realise the bitterness and futility of earthly pleasures before he can have the humility to seek something higher. All religions preach that man's desires can never be fulfilled on earth. For, our possessions are never commensurate with our desires. So it is wise to shake off desires as early as possible and turn to that which can bring lasting peace and bliss. But as scientific achievements have laid open before man a store-house of endless joys and comforts, this injunction of religion no longer appeals to him.

The basis of scientific knowledge is perception, the basis of religious knowledge is superconscious realisation. The difference in the sources of knowledge has created a difference of outlooks. While science has taken a materialistic view of things, religion has taken the deeper, spiritual view. To religion spirit is prior to matter. To science matter is prior to spirit. According to religion man is essentially a spiritual being; mind and body are superimposed on it; they adhere to the real self for the time being as mere adjuncts. Of course, there are minor differences of views as to the exact nature of the self. To science, speaking generally, man is a material-spiritual complex, mind and soul being the later developments of the physical organism. While religion holds man to be of divine descent, science has traced his origin to the bioplasmic cell. Indeed, the constant tendency of science has been, as it were, to disparage man. The other day we read in a well-known American monthly: "Three men, we are reminded, have reduced us to our proper insignificance and put an end to our pri-

mitive dream that we are godlike or that there is any God for us to resemble. They are Copernicus, Darwin and Freud. Copernicus began the revelation of the vastness of the universe and the consequent triviality of our poor molecule of a planet. Darwin showed man's ancestry reaching not up to the stars and their glory, but down to the mud and its fermentation. And Freud has pushed our humiliation into the last pit by the knowledge that what we thought was the light of spirit is only the sickly gleams of funguses growing rank in the cellars of physiology." But it is needless to point out that all these three views represent only half-truths.

Evolution of man is not denied by religion. But according to religious views evolution presupposes involution. The seed cannot grow into the tree unless the tree pre-exists potentially in it. If man can evolve into a god or perfect being, he must be a god involute. The scientists maintain evolution, but do not accept the involution as preceding it. To science man is a risen animal; to religion he is a fallen spirit. These two contradictory views can be reconciled only if the scientists accept involution along with the evolution of man.

According to Freud man's true being is libidinous. Religious feeling is simply the outcome of the suppressed sexual desire. But if sex-energy be the very essence of our being, all desires must necessarily be the manifestations of that energy. How can suppression change their character and transmute them into religious feeling? Sex-desires belong to the animal self. They are carnal. They grow out of the body-idea, while religious tendencies spring from the soul-consciousness. Their source is the divine and immortal spirit. Then the modern sex-psychologists uphold the sublimation of desires. But if the very rudiment of desires be impure and unholy, no process can exalt them into spiritual virtues. The utmost we can do is to eliminate their grossness to a certain extent. We can no way alter their bestial nature. Accord-

ing to religion the pure and divine spirit is the soul of being. That is the main-spring of our thoughts and activities. But the ordinary man who lives in the natural self, cannot receive the inflow of the spiritual energy direct. It acts through his gross mental being which is the repository of latent desires. But as he becomes aware of the true nature of the self, his thoughts and feelings well up from that consciousness. The flood-gate of the divine energy is opened and it is transfused into his whole being. Thus the sublimation of desires conceived by the sex-psychologists differs entirely from that inculcated by religion.

But the above considerations do not prevail yet as much as they should. And as a result pseudo-science is leading men more and more along the path of irreligion.

### III

Will religion live in such a degraded condition or will it die out of the world altogether? Religion cannot die nor can it lose its innate glory and excellence. It is the natural expression of man's being. We can no more get rid of it than we can do away with our very self. In our heart of hearts there is an inevitable craving for the eternal, the immutable. Man can never rest contented with the ephemeral. It can delude him for the time being, but it cannot suppress or subvert his inherent longing for the Truth. So long as there are changes in the world, so long as death and decay are the necessary conditions of life, this instinctive desire for the Real will force itself up time and again and set men on the quest of religion. Science, philosophy and art have the same impulse behind them to discover the Truth. But while science, philosophy and poetry end in a reasoned perception, a conceptual knowledge or an æsthetic apprehension of the Reality, religion leads to its immediate vision. Through religion alone we come in direct contact with the Reality and feel our kinship and become one with it. It penetrates all the layers of our

being and manifests itself in the whole range of life. We live the Truth. Man's eternal relation with the Divine and his union with It have been the key-words of all religions. In the storm and stress of life, these have been man's only hope, solace and inspiration. This is why religion has been the strongest cementing force, the highest motive power, the greatest comforter and the supreme illuminator of life. In all ages and all countries man has paid the greatest homage to religion. Saints and seers have commanded the highest veneration of mankind. The greatest sages were men with spiritual vision. Religion has proved the greatest cultural force. The best literature, architecture, music and poetry have grown out of religious fervour. It has inspired man with the highest altruistic ideals.

Though religion has apparently declined with the growth of science, still it has prevailed through new ideas and conceptions fostered by scientific discoveries. The mysteries and marvels of creation were never before so clearly revealed to man. The wonders of the universe disclosed by scientific investigations have filled many with awe and veneration for a Supreme Intelligent Being. Through their contemplation, they were wafted, as it were, to the very presence of the Creator. These gave them new perspectives to look into the heart of things. Many scientists, though not 'religious' in the narrow sense, were truly spiritual men. Some of them were believers in God and surrendered themselves to His supreme will. T. H. Huxley once wrote to Charles Kingsley: "Science seems to me to teach in the highest and the strongest manner the great truth which is embodied in the Christian conception of entire surrender to the will of God. Sit down before fact as a little child, be prepared to give up every preconceived notion, follow humbly wherever and to whatever abysses nature leads, or you shall learn nothing. I have only begun to learn content and peace of mind since I resolved at all risks to do this. . . .

The absolute justice of the system of things is as clear to me as any scientific fact. The gravitation of sin to sorrow is as certain as that of the earth to the sun, and more so—for experimental proof of the fact is within reach of us all—nay, is before us all in our own lives, if we had but the eyes to see it.”

Philosophy, the science of sciences, has ultimately gravitated towards religion. We generally assume that things exist just as they appear. But critical philosophy has shown that it is not so. They are not real in themselves. They rest on our perception. Just as the external objects are conditioned by our senses, so the internal ideas depend on the nature of our thought. Whatever we perceive, think or conceive is dependent on the knowledge of the subject. Our reason no more than our senses can reveal to us the reality as it is in itself. One has therefore to go beyond mind in order to attain to the absolute Reality. It is the superconscious experience of the seers, in which the relativity of subject and object disappears, that can reveal the Reality. Since the philosophers have apprehended the limitations of reason and its inherent incapacity to disclose the Truth, the study of mysticism has come into vogue in the Western world. The mystic vision is now held to be the only means of realising the highest truth.

Properly speaking, the conclusions of philosophy and science are not alien to religious truths. They await spiritual verities for their fulfilment. Philosophic knowledge is to be supplemented by religious vision. Religion begins where philosophy ends. It is the final goal of science and philosophy. Religion, philosophy and science are inspired by the same love of truth. Religious truths can be better understood in the light of science and philosophy. Scientific and philosophic truths again lead to religious truths when they are carried to their logical conclusion. The modern theory of evolution has a resemblance to the *Sāmkhya* conception of the evolu-

tion of *Prakriti*. But unlike *Sāmkhya* the scientists maintain evolution but ignore involution. It has been shown above that for the sake of logical consistency they should accept both. That one substance pervades the universe is the conclusion arrived at both by religion and science. But according to science it is a material existence, according to religion it is a spiritual entity. The scientific reality is blind though not inert. It can animate but not illuminate. Some modern philosophers have conceived a cosmic life-principle behind the creative order. The creative urge is inherent in it. It disintegrates of itself. Though it is self-moving, it is not an intelligent force. But can unconsciousness bring order and system in the universe? The Indian thinkers also discovered an all-pervasive vital energy which they called *Prāna*, in the creative movement. But behind the *Prāna* they divined a cosmic spirit which guides and controls *Prāna* according to a definite plan and purpose.

The tendency of modern thought has been to find an explanation of a thing in the thing itself. The seed grows into a tree because of a power inherent in it. Darwin's theory of evolution has made man responsible in the first place for his own development. It has turned away our attention from an external Power shaping his destiny to man himself. There must be a latent tendency in man to develop and grow infinitely. Now, if reason, love and knowledge unfold in man, they must be in the very being of man. An urge towards perfection is the motive power behind all human aspirations and activities. Why should man feel a natural attraction for the reality that is beyond phenomena? Why can he not remain satisfied with the finite and the evanescent? He is not contented even to grasp the Reality through intellect or æsthetic imagination; he wants to see it face to face, to touch it. Nay, he seeks to be united with it, to lose himself in it. This feeling of affinity with the Real, the

Eternal, the Divine, is the first blossoming of religious consciousness. Man longs for the Eternal and the Infinite and at the same time feels his littleness, weakness and imperfection. This creates a sense of awe—a blended feeling of attraction and repulsion. It is not fear; for fear always repels, never attracts. Like attracts like. The human self is eternally related to the Divine. Divinity is in its nature. The innate purity, eternity, luminosity and blissfulness of the self have been acknowledged directly or indirectly by all great religions of the world. But in no other religion has this fact been given such prominence as in the Vedanta. This grand old truth is now making its way into the modern mind through the conglomeration of theories and doctrines.

#### IV

The self is of all the most real to us. The reality of everything presupposes the reality of the self. A thing exists because *I* feel its existence. The reality of all other things is judged by referring it to the self. The self is the eternal seer. The external objects, body and mind are all seen by it. The whole world of facts, the entire realm of ideas rest on the consciousness of the perceiver. It is the datum of all experience and knowledge. It is the ultimate reality. It cannot be seen, because it is the seer,—everything is revealed to it. The self is this seer. It is consciousness itself. It cannot be seen, but it can be realised. It cannot be denied, for the denial presupposes another seer and conceives it as seen, which is absurd. The subject can never turn into the object.

The self is pure intelligence. It illumines everything. It is also bliss itself. It is the only true object of love. Whatever we love we love for the sake of the self. I like this body because I project my self on it, and everything favourable to the body becomes dear to me. The wife, children, parents and friends are loved by me, because my self is reflected in them. The feeling of love

is indissolubly connected with the 'my'-idea. The more the self is expanded, the greater is the range of love. Love and bliss are inseparable. Where there is bliss, there is love. Where there is love, there is bliss. The self being bliss itself, evokes spontaneous love.

The pure, blissful, self-effulgent *Atman* is our true self. It is the knower of body and mind. The knower and the known are ever distinct. We perceive ourselves to be the knower, still we identify ourselves with the known, the body, mind, etc. This is absurd. Yet it is a fact. We cannot help it. We can neither conceive ourselves as pure spirit nor think of ourselves as gross matter. The two ideas are as it were woven into one. By identifying the self with body and mind, we have imposed on ourselves all the limitations and imperfections that belong solely to body and mind. Hunger, disease, growth, decay, birth, death, happiness, misery are the properties of body and mind. They are falsely ascribed to the changeless self, the witness of all. We live in mind and body, but we must be re-instated in the purity and blissfulness of self. The whole history of spiritual progress is simply a travel from the body-idea to the spirit-consciousness.

To uphold the pristine glory of *Atman* is the supreme need of religion to-day. One can be religious without faith in God, but not without faith in the essential purity and eternity of *Atman*. A true atheist is not he who disbelieves God, but he who has lost faith in *Atman*. This is another great lesson the modern world has to learn from the ancient sages of India. The *Sāṃkhya* system of Kapila denies God, still it has been included among the theistic systems (*Astika Darshanas*) by the Hindu philosophers, simply because it propounds the glory of the *Atman* as declared by the Vedas. There can be no faith in God without faith in the self. He who does not believe in the Divinity of the self cannot have any relation with God. Relation exists between what are alike and of the same nature. That is

why in the *Gîtâ* Sri Krishna holds before Arjuna the sublimity and glory of *Atman* at the very outset. The faith in the *Atman* is the starting-point of religion. The self offers the first clue to Reality. Turn to whichever direction you may, to the highest heaven or the farthest limit of the horizon, nowhere will you find a loop-hole to Truth. So you must have your foothold secure on the reality of the self, which is so apparent to you, before you can enter into the realm of Light and Bliss eternal. 'This *Atman* is *Brahman*',—reiterate the whole *Upanishads*—pointing inward. We see God within us. Nobody ever realised God outside. Self-knowledge is always involved in God-consciousness. There can be no God-vision without self-realisation. The one is but a phase of the other.

To believe in the absolute purity of the self and to realise its Divinity is the religion that demands acceptance by the scientific mind of to-day. Human nature is never against religion, the religious spirit is ingrained in man's very being. What man gets disgusted with, is the crystallised form, which, however appealing to the people of one age, fails to attract the men of a different age. So religion requires to be reinstituted according to the spirit of the age. The present tendency is towards a religion which does not rest on external sanction, which is not to be imposed on man by outer authorities, but should be the outcome of an inward perception, a deeper understanding of reality and a nobler vision of life. Man should be religious out of inner necessity. Self-imposed religion, as self-imposed morality, will seem an impossibility to those who have no faith in the inherent greatness and goodness of man. Religion and morality lose all meaning unless man pursues them on his own initiative. This age requires a religion which does not depend on outer sanctities, but holds life and spirit as essentially sacred. It should not be confined in certain rites, objects, ceremonies, doctrines or dogmas, but

find adequate expression in thought and conduct. The reorientation of life has been the cry of the age. It is the man's outlook on life that the world counts to-day, and not the particular act or belief however righteous it may be. The external distinction of the secular and the spiritual is fast fading away. The stress is laid on a higher conception of reality which should shape the judgment of values and transform human relationships, in fact the whole range of life.

Spiritual life, rightly understood, is not a life of isolation. It does not consist in mere disengagement of the spirit from the contagion of the flesh. The self should realise its aloofness from the physical and the mental being, and at the same time guide and restrain them according to its needs and ends. The spiritual consciousness must be infused into the whole system and expressed in concrete forms. Belief without conduct has no value. Our thoughts and acts are but expressions of self-consciousness. It is the greatest creative factor of life. We are what we believe ourselves to be. He who thinks that he is pure by nature, that wickedness and vice are foreign to him, pure he will be in no time. He who considers himself weak, his ideas and deeds will bear the impress of that mentality. Humanity progresses along the line of self-consciousness. Evolution of life means the evolution of consciousness. The higher the self-consciousness, the greater the life.

The more a man knows himself to be pure and perfect by nature, the more glorified will he be. The more he realises that weakness, ignorance and unhappiness are mere accretions on his ideal self, the greater will be the manifestation of Divinity in him. His thoughts, views, aims and sentiments will be coloured by that consciousness. By and by the world will appear to him in a new light. As he will feel his inward goodness and greatness, he will perceive the same in others as well.

His attitude to the world will consist of the highest and the noblest feelings of love, respect and service. The consciousness 'I am He' must develop its necessary counterpart 'Thou art That'. The two views will grow side by side. Never was humanity so intensely realised as an organic whole as in the present age. Greater emphasis is being laid on the community than on the individuals. The modern faith must harmonise individualism with humanitarianism.

With the knowledge of the self, man's vision of life will be clearer, wider and deeper. He will feel that his self is at the same time the selves of others. It is One Self that exists in all. It is One Spirit that pervades the universe and shapes it from within. The immanence of a formative principle in the world-system is more in conformity with the modern thought than an extra-cosmic God. But the creative force revealed to spiritual vision is not blind energy. Nor is it a moral law. It is the Divine Government that urges everything to ultimate good,—a fact that takes away from the rigours of duty, turns work into worship and elevates altruism to self-dedication.

The world is moving apace. It always looks forward. But it often misses what is under its very eyes. Attempts are being made to prognosticate the future of various aspects of life. We receive forecasts of Art, Science, Religion, Civilisation, Music, Poetry, Labour, Marriage and what not. We for ourselves do not claim any pre-

vision. We have simply tried to envisage what is perhaps too near to see. We have said that faith in the self and the realisation of the self are the religion of to-day. We do not mean thereby that that will be the only existing religion in future, that other faiths will be obsolete or prove abortive. We only mean that this of all others will come into prominence, as it will be embraced by the advanced section of humanity. Different faiths are necessary for different minds, which cannot find inspiration from a single creed. It is the age of synthesis. The faith of the enlightened must harmonise all other faiths. The monism of the Vedanta which declares *Atman* to be Existence-Knowledge-Bliss absolute, is the key to all other religions. It can receive all into its infinite bosom. All faiths, morals and theories are according to it more or less perfect presentations of One Truth. It has been well said by Gaudapāda that the dualistic faiths contradict *Advaitism* as well as one another. But *Advaitism* contradicts none. *Advaitism* is the transcendental truth, *Dvaitism* is its variation. Herein also lies the supreme value of *Advaitism*. Thus, faith in the Self will become more and more the religion of the advanced section of humanity. Not only that. This faith also will find varied expressions even through the existing creeds, however avowedly dualistic. For the Spirit of the Age demands and enjoins it, and none can possibly escape its influence.

## THE DIARY OF A DISCIPLE

OCTOBER 12, 1919 (*Concluded*).

*Disciple* : "The faithful disciples of Jesus thought that the Heavenly Father would actually come down and establish His Kingdom on earth."

*Swami* : "Why? He said to them : 'The Kingdom of God is within you.'"

*Disciple* : "Of the Christian saints

how wonderful was the life of Saint Francis of Assisi!"

*Swami* : "Yes. He meditated on Jesus so intensely that he got stigmata in his hands and feet, in the same parts as those of the crucified Christ. He suffered from them till death."

*Disciple* : "In Islam also many great saints have been born."

*Swami*: "Yes, certainly. It is because such great souls are born in every religion and realise the Truth that these religions live through ages."

"*Swamiji* (Swami Vivekananda) used to say: 'All come and say: 'Tell us the way, tell us the way,' but none would follow any.'"

"It is wrong to say that even when one calls on the Lord earnestly, one will not find Him. There was a boy who called Him as Brother Madhusudana. What was his name?"

*Disciple*: "Jatila."

*Swami*: "Yes, yes, Jatila. He was afraid to go to school all alone through a wood. His mother said: 'You have a brother, Madhusudana. Call Him and you will have no fear.' The boy was convinced that Madhusudana was his real brother. Whenever he felt frightened in the forest, he called his brother Madhusudana and he came and guided him. When the school-master learnt this, he said to him: 'Can you show me your brother?' 'Why not?' replied the boy. They went to the forest. As the boy called, Madhusudana came. But the teacher could not see Him, he only heard the sound of His anklets. Even this was not vouchsafed to the mother. She gave the instruction only to dispel her son's fear, but herself had no faith in it."

"Do you know the story of the milkmaid crossing the ocean of life? A milkmaid supplied milk to the house of a Brahmin pandit. She had to cross a river on the way. As the ferry-boat could not be found at the right time every day, she was very late now and then in her supply of milk, and the pandit's children had to suffer much. So he severely scolded her one day. 'What shall I do, Sir,' replied the milkmaid, 'I do not find the ferry-boat in right time every day, so I am delayed.' The learned pandit said at once: 'Oh, you cannot cross this small river? How will you then cross the ocean of life?' The illiterate milkmaid had not even heard the phrase 'the ocean of

life.' She stood dumb-founded. Then the pandit explained to her that by taking God's name one could easily cross the ocean of life, what to speak of this little river. The milkmaid was much delighted and went away."

"Henceforth she supplied milk at the right time. She was never late. One day the pandit said to her: 'Now I see you come every day at the proper time. How do you cross the river?' 'Why, Sir? It is you who kindly told me the means. Now I have not to wait for the ferry-boat, nor have I to pay the boatman.' 'How do you mean? Who then takes you across the river?' 'Nobody has to help me, Sir. I come straight down to the river, repeat the name of Hari and walk across the waters.' 'Can you show me?' 'Why not, Sir? Come along.' The pandit did not understand. He followed the milkmaid in suspense. The milkmaid went close to the river, repeated the name of Hari and walked across the river, as if there was no more than knee-deep water in it. As she reached the other side, she turned back and saw the pandit standing wonder-struck on the other side. She cried out: 'How is it? Why are you standing there, Sir? Repeat the name of Hari and come along.' The pandit was startled, and spell-bound he walked down to the river uttering the name of Hari. But as the water became deeper and deeper, he raised his clothes with both hands.—He had no faith at heart, though his lips uttered the name of God. Finding the pandit in such plight, the milkmaid said: 'Oh, you repeat the name of Hari and at the same time raise your clothes? That will not do, Sir.'"

"A little self-examination will make everything clear. Lately I witnessed a strange fight within my body. During my recent illness, it was reduced to a skeleton. This muscle that you see now (*touching the calf muscle*), was all gone. All this grew anew afterwards."

*Disciple*: "Do you mean the influenza you suffered from last time?"

*Swami*: "No. It was at Puri. Then there was nothing in the body except bone and skin. I could neither turn aside nor move my limbs. Only the power of speech was left to me. One day I saw that the life within the body was engaged in a severe struggle with another from the outside. The struggle was severe and lasted for a long time. They were in close grip with each other, and now the one and now the other seemed to win. The external one was struggling to snatch away the life from the body, but life would not go. At last the outer one was defeated and went away. So life remained. Had it been defeated, it would have gone away with the other one, and the body would have remained lifeless, that is, I would have died. I was watching the battle in wonder from a distance as it were. As soon as the outer one went away defeated, I said to those who were about me: 'This time I am saved, I won't die.' Then all this flesh grew anew. Before or after this incident, I do not exactly remember when, Swamiji (Vivekananda) appeared to me and said at once: 'What is this? Get up.'"

*Brahmachâri S*: "It was before, Sir."

After the conversation the Swami went into the inner room to have his tiffin before going out for a walk.

*A*: "Did you see how direct was his experience, how forceful are his words? I have been fortunate enough to be in his blessed company for a long

time. I also lived long in the holy company of Maharaj (Swami Brahmananda). If one hears their inspiring words every day and also practises meditation, one can make rapid progress in the spiritual realm. I have perceived it myself

"When he underwent twelve operations in one day at Puri, even the doctors were frightened. But this sage kept perfectly quiet. He disengaged the mind from the body, which soared far and beyond. I have not heard that so many operations were ever performed without chloroform."

Shortly after Swami Turiyananda went out for a walk and proceeded towards the Hindu University. The disciple followed him and noticed on the way the red little feet of a baby held up in the arms of an Indian mother, and remarked: "This reminds me of the little feet of Gopala as He was lying in the arms of Gopâler Mâ."

*Swami*: "Oh, how wonderful were Sri Ramakrishna's dealings with the brass image of Ramlala! When he spoke to us of these strange happenings, little did we understand him. Ramlala went frolicking to the Ganges to bathe and got into deep water. The Master asked him to come up, but he would not, so he gave him a slap on the cheek. One day the Master wept bitterly, as he said: 'He who was fed with butter and cream by Mother Yashoda, was offered unclean puffed rice by me!' We were struck dumb with wonder."

## EARLY HELLENIC-CHRISTIAN MYSTICISM AND ITS RELATION TO HINDU MYSTICISM\*

By ROMAIN ROLLAND

### I

One of my great desires is to see the creation of Chairs of Comparative Eastern and Western Metaphysics and Mysticism in India and Europe. They

should be mutually complementary; for their work is really essential if the

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human spirit is to learn to know itself in its entirety. Their object would not be a kind of puerile steeplechase seeking to establish the primitive chronology of each group of thought. Such research would be meaningless : religious historians who seek only to discover the intellectual interdependence of systems, forget the vital point, —the knowledge that religions are not ordinary matters of intellectual dialectic, but facts of experience, and that although reason steps in afterwards to construct systems upon these facts, they would not hold good for an hour if they were not based upon the solid foundation of experience. Hence the facts must first be known and studied. I do not know whether any modern psycho-physiologist, armed with all the latest instruments of the new sciences of the soul, will be able to attain a full knowledge of them one day, but I am willing to believe it. In the mean while such simple observation as we have at our disposal at present, leads us to recognise the existence of *the same religious facts* as the foundations of all great organised religions, that have spread over the face of the earth throughout the march of the centuries. At the same time it is impossible to attribute to the mutual actions and reactions of nations any appreciable effect on their production : for their uprising is spontaneous, they grow from the soil under certain influences in the life of humanity almost "seasonal" in their recurrence, like the grain that shoots up with the return of spring throughout the life of nature.

The first result of an objective study of Comparative Metaphysics and Mysticism would be to demonstrate the universality and perennial occurrence of the great facts of religious experience, their close resemblance under the diverse costumes of race and time, attesting to the persistent unity of the human spirit, or rather—for it goes deeper than the spirit which must delve for it—the identity of the materials constituting humanity. Before any

discussion of the comparative value of ideological structures erected by religion and metaphysics in India and Alexandria (to take for example the case with which we are here concerned), it is necessary to establish the fact that at bottom the illuminations of Philo, the great ecstasies of Plotinus and Porphyry, so like the Samādhis of Indian Yogins, were identical experiences. Hence the term Christianity must not be used to the exclusion of the other thousands of mystic experiences, on whose basis it was built up—not in one feverish birth, but by a series of births throughout the centuries, fresh shoots sprouting from the ancient tree with each spring.

That is in truth the heart of the problem. Once these great experiences have been established, compared and classified, Comparative Mysticism would then and only then have the right to pass on to a study of systems. Systems exist solely to provide the mind with a means for registering the results of enlightenment and to classify in one complete and co-ordinated whole the claims of the senses, reason and intuition—(by whatever name we may choose to call the eighth sense or the second reason which those who have experienced it call the first). Systems are then a continually renewed effort to bring about the synthesis of what a man, a race or an epoch has experienced (by the use of all the various instruments at the disposal of knowledge). And of necessity its own particular temperament is always to be found in each system.

Moreover, it is intensely interesting for all kinds of minds, morally akin but scattered through space and time in different countries and different ages, to know the varieties of their own thought, produced by all these different temperaments, which are simultaneously the limits and the womb of force. India and Europe are equally concerned to enrich themselves by a knowledge of all the forms developed by the same mental or vital power, a

theme upon which their diverse races, epochs and cultures have embroidered their own variations.

Hence to return to the subject that is occupying us here, I do not believe that modern Indian Metaphysics can remain any longer in ignorance of Alexandrine and Christian Mysticism—any more than our Western intellectuals can be allowed in the future to stop their study of the “Divine Infinity” at the borders of Greece. When two types of humanity as magnificent as India and Greece have dealt with the same subject, it is obvious that each will have enriched it with its own particular splendours, and that the double masterpiece will harmonise with the new spirit of universal humanity we are seeking to establish.

In these pages I can do no more than to point out the way to the intelligence of my readers. And here where I am addressing myself especially to the Vedântists of India, I wish to give them at least a glimpse of the characteristics wherein Mediterranean Mysticism and their own are alike and wherein they differ. I shall particularly insist on the chief monument of early Christian Mysticism—the work of the Pseudo-Denis, because as it came from the East it already had those characteristics which it was to impose upon the metaphysical physiognomy of the West during six centuries of Christianity.

## II

It is generally conceded that the Greek spirit, while eminently endowed for art and science, was almost a closed book to the idea of Infinity, and that it only accepted the idea with mistrust. Although the Infinite is included in principle by Anaximander and Anaxagoras, they give it a material character and stamp it with the imprint of scientific instinct. Plato, who in his *Republic* touched in passing on the conception of the Idea of Good superior to being, essence and intelligence, did not dwell upon it and seemed

to regard it merely as an idea of perfection and not of infinity. To Aristotle, the infinite was imperfect. To the Stoics it was unreal.<sup>1</sup>

It is not until we come to the first century that we find Philo, a Jew of Alexandria, brought up in Greek thought, introducing into it the notion of Infinity derived from his people and attempting to hold the balance between the two currents. The balance, however, remained an unstable one, and all through his life Philo oscillated between the two temperaments. In spite of His being indeterminate, the God of the Jews kept a very strong personal flavour, which Philo's nostrils could not dispense with. On the other hand his Greek education allowed him to analyse with rationalist precision the obscure powers of his prophetic people, which had brought them into contact with God. His theory of ecstasy, first by withdrawal into oneself, then by the flight of the ego and the total negation of the senses, reason and even being that they might identify themselves with the One, is, in the main, exactly the same as that practised always by the Indian in the East. Philo eventually sketches an attempt to attach the Infinite to the finite by means of intermediary powers, from whence emerges the “second God,” the Word, “the only Begotten Son of God.” With him, perhaps unwittingly (for he remained stamped with the thumb of his rough modeller, Jehovah), the Infinite of the East entered the Mediterranean world.

A hundred facts testify to how great an extent the East was mingled with Hellenic thought during the second century of our era. Let us recall only three or four of the most characteristic: Plutarch quotes Zoroaster and devotes a whole treatise to Egyptian mythology. The historian, Eusebius, was a

<sup>1</sup> It must not be forgotten that during the Alexandrine epoch there was still a connection between India and the Hellenic West. But the history of thought has not taken it into account and even to-day is very insufficiently aware of it.

witness to the interest felt in his day in Asiatic philosophies and religions. One of the first builders of Alexandrianism, Numenius, who extolled Pythagoras above all other Greeks, probed for the spirit of his age into the past and believed that Pythagoras had spread in Greece the first wisdom of the Egyptians, the Magi, the Indians and the Jews.<sup>2</sup> Plotinus, a Greek of Egypt, departed with Gordian's army, in order to study Persian and Indian philosophy. And although Gordian's death in Mesopotamia stopped him half way, his intention shows his intellectual kinship to the Indian spirit.<sup>3</sup> But at the same time he was in communion with the Christians. One of his listeners was a Doctor of the New Church: Origen; and they mutually respected each other. Plotinus was not merely a book-philosopher. He was, at the same time, both a saint and a great Yogin. His pure image, reminiscent of Ramakrishna in certain characteristics, deserves to be more piously kept in memory by both the East and the West.

<sup>2</sup>Numenius, whose influence over Plotinus was of capital importance, "had directed all his efforts," says Eusebius, "towards a fusion of Pythagoras and Plato, while seeking for a confirmation of their philosophical doctrines in the religious doctrines of the Brahmins, the Indians, the Magi, and the Egyptians."

<sup>3</sup>His theory of reincarnation bears the stamp of Indian thought. All actions and thoughts count. The purified and detached are not reborn into the corporeal, they remain in the world of the mind and of bliss, without reason, remembrance or speech; their liberty is absolute; they are made one with the Perfect, and are absorbed in It without losing themselves in It. Such bliss can be obtained in the present by ecstasy.

His theory of matter and his definitions of it evoke the Hindu Mâyâ.

His vision of the universe as a Divine Game, where "the actors constantly change their costumes," where social revolutions, the crash of empires, are "changes of scene and character, the tears and cries of actors," is the same as the Indian.

Above all, his profound science of "deification", identification with God by the path of Negation, is, as I shall show, one of its most magnificent expressions and might have come from one of the great Indian Yogins.

It would be lacking in the respect his great work deserves, to summarise it here. But I must enumerate its most striking characteristics that are analogous to Indian thought.

### III

Plotinus' First Being, who is "before all things" no less than in all that comes after Him, is the Absolute. Absolutely infinite, indeterminate, incomprehensible, He can only be defined by negation. "Let us take all things from Him, let us affirm nothing about Him, let us not lie by saying that there is anything in Him, but let Him simply be."

He is above good and ill, act and knowledge, being and essence. He has neither face nor form, neither movement nor number, neither virtue nor feeling. We cannot even say that He wishes or that He does. . . . "We say what He is not: we cannot say what He is." . . . In brief Plotinus collects the whole litany of "Noes", so dear to the Indian mystic (and the Christian) to express the Absolute. But without the self-satisfaction mingled with conceit and puerility that most men bring to it, Plotinus impregnates it always with his beautiful modesty, a fact that makes it very touching, and that I should say is more Christlike than are many Christians (such as the author of *Mystic Theology*, which I shall examine later).

"When we say," he writes, "that He is above being, we do not say that He is this or that. We affirm nothing, we do not give Him any name. . . . We do not try to understand Him: it would in fact be laughable to try to understand that incomprehensible nature. But we, being men, with doubts like the sorrows of childhood, do not know what to call Him, and so we try to name the Ineffable. . . . He must have indulgence for our language. . . . Even the name of the One exposes no more than the negation of his plurality. . . . The problem must be given up, and research fall into silence. What

is the good of seeking when further progress is impossible? . . . . If we wish to speak of God, or to conceive Him, let us give up everything! When this has been done, (let us not add anything to Him but) let us examine rather whether there is still not something to be given up. . . ."

In the path of negation has India ever said anything more perfect or more humble?

Nevertheless, it is not a question of negation. This inconceivable Absolute is the supreme and superabundant Perfection, whose continual expansion engenders the universe. He is suspended to it by love and He fills it entirely: for, without ever emerging from Himself, He is present everywhere in His entirety. In the effort of the human spirit to distinguish the successive degrees of this divine procession of worlds, the mystic Greek in a splendid outburst of enlightened enthusiasm salutes Intelligence as the first born of God, the best after Him, itself "a great God" "the second God," the first Hypostasis, which engenders the second, the Soul, the one and the multiple, the mother of all living things. There follows the unfolding of the whole world of the senses, within the bounds whereof Matter is found, which is the last degree of being, or rather of non-being, the Infinite negative, the absolute and unattained limit at the opposite antipodes of the thrust of Divine Power.

So, this Absolute, which our minds can only approach through negation, is affirmed in all that is. And It is in ourselves. It is the very basis of our being. And we can be rejoined to It by concentration. Yoga, the great path of Divine union, as described by Plotinus, is a combination of Jñāna Yoga and Bhakti Yoga. After a first and long stage of purification, the soul, as it enters the phase of contemplation, should renounce knowledge as a starting-point. "The soul withdraws from the One, and is no longer one entity when it acquires knowledge. Know-

ledge in effect is a discourse, and a discourse is multiplicity. In order to contemplate the first Being a man must be raised above knowledge."

Ecstasy begins. And the door of ecstasy for the Hellenic spirit, always tenacious of its rights, is Beauty. Through it the inflamed soul soars towards the light of the Good, above which there is nothing.

The description of this ecstasy is like the descriptions<sup>4</sup> of both Hindus and Christians: for there is only one form of union with the Absolute, by whatever name the mind tries first or last to clothe the Absolute. According to Plotinus the soul ought to empty itself of all form and content, of all evil and good, of all thought of union with That which is neither form, nor content, nor evil, nor good nor thought.<sup>5</sup> It should

"This admirable conception drawn from the most sacred fibres of the West with its passion for Beauty, has its source in our divine Plato:

"In the domain of love," said Socrates to the Stranger of Mantineus, "to do well one must pass from the love of a beautiful form to the love of all beautiful forms or to physical beauty in general; then from the love of beautiful bodies to the love of souls, beautiful actions and beautiful thoughts. In this ascension of the spirit through moral beauty a marvellous beauty will suddenly appear to him, eternal, exempt from all generation, all corruption, absolutely beautiful: consisting neither in a beautiful face, nor in any body nor in any thought nor in any science; not residing anywhere but in itself, whether in heaven, or on earth, but existing eternally in itself and for itself in its absolute and perfect unity." (*Banquet*: summary).

Therein is contained a Yoga of Beauty where Bhakti to a certain extent is joined to Jñāna. I do not say that it is peculiar to the West, for we have traces<sup>6</sup> of it in India, but it is the form which of all others is natural and dear to us.

[\*We should say, plenty of it.—Ed.]

<sup>4</sup> Not to know but to be—is also taught by the Vedānta: "Knowledge is," said Vivekananda, "as it were, a lower step, a degradation. We are It already, how to know it?" (*Jñana Yoga*: "The Real and the Apparent Man").

This is also the famous doctrine of the *Docta Ignorantia*, belonging to Christian mystics: the knowledge above all knowledge.

even empty itself of the thought of God in order to become one with Him. When it has reached this point, He appears within it, He is it. "It has become God or rather it is God. A centre which coincides with another centre." . . . They are one. There is perfect identity. The soul has returned to itself."

No man in the world has described it with such power and psychological detail as St. Jean de la Croix in his famous treatise on the *Dark Night*—the double Night: of the senses, and of the spirit. "First relinquish all feeling, secondly all knowledge,"—St. Bonaventura had already said.

Plotinus often experienced this great ecstasy, according to the definite testimony of Porphyry:

"To him appeared this God who has neither form nor face, who is above intelligence. I myself, Porphyry, once in my life approached this God and was united with Him. I was seventy-eight. This union formed the sum total of Plotinus' desires. He had this divine joy four times while I was staying with him. What then happened was ineffable."

So it is of the greatest interest to know from the mouth of Plotinus himself what were his impressions during that state. The most striking is the anguish of the soul as it approached Divine Union, for it was unable to sustain the intensity long. "Certainly here below each time that the soul approaches that without form, it shrinks, it trembles at having before it only that which is nothing."

And as I read these lines I think of the mortal terror of young Vivekananda during his first visits to Ramakrishna, when the enlightened Master made him aware for the first time of the dizzy contact with the formless Absolute.

"The soul," continues Plotinus (and the rest of his description would serve for Vivekananda's experience), "returns with joy . . . it lets itself fall until it meets some sensible object whereon to stop and to rest. . ."

J. A. Symonds says the same thing: "It (trance) consisted in a gradual but swiftly progressive obliteration of space, time, sensation, and the multitudinous factors of experience . . . But the Self persisted, formidable in its vivid keenness, feeling the most poignant doubt about reality, ready, as it seemed, to find existence break as breaks a bubble round about it. And what then? The apprehension of a coming dissolution, the grim conviction that this state was the last state of the conscious self, the sense that

I have said enough to awaken in every Hindu the desire to know more of this great fellow Yogin, who, in the last hour of Greece, in her majestic sunset, wedded Plato to India. In this divine marriage the male Hellenic genius, as he embraced the female Kirtana—the inspired Bacchante—imposed upon her thoughts an ordered beauty and intelligent harmony, resulting in one of the most beautiful strains of spiritual music. And the great Christian mysticism of the first centuries was the first-born of this union.

In the following pages I shall try to paint, however imperfectly, a portrait of the most beautiful type, in my opinion, of this early Christian thought, springing from this marriage of East and West: Denis (Dionysius) the Areopagite.

#### IV

I have often had occasion to notice analogies and even traces of kinship between the conceptions of Hindu and Christian mysticism at their highest moments. This likeness is the more striking as one approaches the source of Christianity; and I want to demon-

I had followed the last thread of being to the verge of the abyss, . . . stirred or seemed to stir me up again. The return to ordinary conditions of sentient existence began by my first recovering the power of touch. . . I was thankful for this return from the abyss. . . ." (One of the many contemporary witnesses quoted by William James in his chapter on Mysticism in *The Varieties of Religious Experience*).

But a great mystic like Plotinus had hardly set foot again on the earth than he longed for that from which he had fled . . . The deadly vertigo did not cease to attract him. The soul that has once tasted the terrible Union, yearns to find it again, and it must return to the Infinite.

The blind fury of certain neophytes of modern literary Catholicism in the West in their denunciation of the danger of the East, is a fit subject for irony. They make it the antithesis of the West, forgetting that the whole faith they proclaim comes to them from the East, and that in the ritual of the first centuries, as decreed by Denis the Areopagite, the West is represented by doc-

trate it to my Eastern readers. They will profit by it more than my Western readers, for as I have already stated, they are all too ignorant of the marvellous treasure of European Christian metaphysics.

Whatever the polemics that have been delivered round the name of the Areopagite—whether Denis or Pseudo-Denis— they matter little to us here, for all accounts agree that his writings fall authentically in the period about 532 or 538, and from that date their authority became law in the Christian Church and was invoked by Popes, Patriarchs and learned doctors in the Synods and Councils of the seventh and eighth centuries down to the ninth century when they were triumphantly installed in Paris by Charles the Bald, who had them translated by Scot Erigene, whence they impregnated the mystic thought of the Western Church. Their power is attested by St. Anselm, by St. Bonaventura, and by St. Thomas, who wrote commentaries upon them; the great doctors of the thirteenth century put them above the writings of the Church

tors of the faith as "the region of shades", making the catechumen "hold up his hands as a sign of anathema" and "blow on Satan three times." (*Cf. Book of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, II 2. 6).

"For a thousand years this greatest master of Christian mysticism was supposed to be Denis the Anchorite, a member of the Athenian Areopagus at the time of St. Paul who converted him about 5 A.D., and later Bishop of Athens (he has even been identified with St. Denis of France). First Laurence Valla, then Erasmus, then the Reformation brutally wronging his legend, and being wickedly desirous of discrediting the work, which was sufficiently powerful to lose nothing, they changed the name of the author and sought to make it anonymous. Modern research seems to have agreed that he who wrote those books lived about 500 A.D., and that at all events, although he may have been earlier than this date (according to the testimony of some learned disciples of his in the ninth century, when they revived a controversy in existence about 400 A.D. on the subject of the authenticity of his writings), he cannot possibly have been later than Justinian who quoted his authority.

Fathers; in the fourteenth century the mystic furnaces of Meister Eckhart, and of Ruysbroeck still more, were fed on their fires; again at the time of the Italian Renaissance they were the delectation of the great Christian Platonists, Marsilio Ficino, Pico della Mirandola; and they continued to be the substance of our Bérullians, our Salesians,<sup>9</sup> and the greatest mystics of the seventeenth century in France, as the recent works of Abbé Brémond have shown.

Hence whatever the name of the architect, they form the monumental substructures of all Christian thought in the West during the ten most important centuries of its development. And they are more than that to the man who has eyes to see—they form one of the most harmonious cathedrals that has grown out of that thought and that still remains a living witness to it.

Its singular value is that it stands just at the junction of East and West, at the exact moment when their teachings were united.<sup>10</sup> Whether its architect has borrowed his art from Alexandrine masters or whether they borrowed it largely from him,<sup>11</sup> the result is the same for us: a union of the highest Hellenic thought and the purest Christian thought, a marriage regularly consecrated in the eyes

<sup>9</sup> I would remind the reader that these names designate the French religious school of François de Sales, or of Bérulle, in the seventeenth century.

<sup>10</sup> If the date 500, as generally accepted today, is the central point of the career of Denis, he must have seen the end of Alexandria and the closing of the Neo-Platonic school of Athens in 529. Therefore, in a sense he closed the eyes of Greek philosophy.

<sup>11</sup> It is certain at least that they both arise from the common metaphysical depths, wherein the wealth of Platonism, early Christianity, and the ancient East were mingled, and that from this treasure the first five centuries of our era drew with open hands. It was a period of universalism of thought. According to the tradition (based on one of his extant letters), Denis visited Egypt in his youth with a friend, Apollonphanes, who followed the Sophist philosophy, and had remained a pagan, and in the letter Apollonphanes, who never forgave him his conversion to Christianity, accuses him of "parri-

of the Church and acknowledged by her throughout the West.

Before tasting its fruits, I must remove from the minds of my readers the impression of discredit thrown in advance over the old master by the unfortunate word *Pseudo*, which has in it the taint of falsehood. For instance a beautiful picture called a "false Rembrandt" is still scorned, because the idea of false implies imitation! But if it pleases an artist to put his work under somebody else's name who never left any work behind him, is that an argument against his originality? At most such a scheme might lead to suspicion of the masked man's honesty. (But this is less explicable after a study of Denis'

works : for if there is one impression left by them, it is that of the most complete moral integrity; it is unthinkable that so high a mind could have stooped to subterfuge, even in the interest of his faith; and I would prefer to think that after his death, others exploited him.) At all events and in spite of quite definite interpolations and retouches in the original text, that text still presents from end to end—in treatises and letters—a unity and harmony, which leave on the memory of those who have read them an indelible impression of the serene face of the old master, familiar and more vivid than that of many living people.<sup>12</sup>

(To be concluded)

## SWAMI BRAHMANANDA—THE SPIRITUAL SON OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

BY SWAMI SATPRAKASHANANDA

(Continued from the last issue)

In the summer of 1885 Sri Ramakrishna had a throat trouble which gradually developed into 'clergyman's sore throat' and ultimately into cancer as diagnosed by the physicians called in for his treatment. The disease was ascribed to the undue exercise of the vocal organs. After his meeting with Keshab Chandra Sen in 1875 his name and fame spread far and wide. The number of visitors rapidly increased, and they came at all hours of the day for spiritual enlightenment and solace. He talked to them unceasingly on reli-

gion and God. He attended religious functions in Calcutta and other places. All these meant too much strain on his physical system, especially because the regularity of food and rest could hardly be observed under the circumstances. Even when the symptoms of disease clearly manifested themselves, he could not be persuaded to take the much-needed rest, but worked as untiringly as before to deliver his message to those who flocked to him daily in increasing numbers from all quarters. The illness was aggravated and proved obstinate.

cide", "because," as Denis explains, "I lacked filial piety in using against the Greeks what I had learned from the Greeks." The affiliation of Greece and Christianity is here definitely established.

<sup>12</sup> It is to be regretted for Christianity's sake that this work should be so difficult of access: for very few religious texts give a higher and at the same time more human, more compassionate and purer representation of Christian thought than those pages. In them no word of intolerance, animosity, vain and bitter polemic, comes to destroy

the beautiful concord of intelligence and goodness—whether he explains with affectionate and broad understanding the problem of evil, and embraces all, even the worst, in the rays of Divine God,—whether he recalls a monk of spiteful faith to meekness and tells him an admirable legend (which would have enchanted old Tolstoy) of Christ coming down again from heaven to defend a renegade, about to perish, against one of his own sect, with this rebuke to the inhuman Christian:—"Strike Me too then!" (Letter VIII).

In September, 1885, he was removed to Shyampukur in Calcutta for better treatment. The devotees, poor as most of them were, made every possible arrangement for his treatment, diet and attendance. Some of the young devotees headed by Narendranath attended him day and night leaving aside for the time being all thought of home, study and other concerns. Rakhal also threw himself heart and soul into the service of the Master. On the night of the annual festival of Kali which fell on the 6th November that year, the devotees headed by Girish Chandra Ghosh perceived the holy presence of the Divine Mother in Sri Ramakrishna and worshipped him as such. Rakhal, too, was in the party and offered flowers at the feet of the Master. Though suffering physically, Sri Ramakrishna lived constantly in the beatific mood. The physical ailment could not touch the real man in him. Three months passed, but there was no sign of improvement. Now it was thought advisable to remove him from the close atmosphere of Calcutta to an open and quiet place in the suburb. Accordingly a garden house was hired at Cossipore, a little to the north of the City. Sri Ramakrishna occupied the new premises on the 11th December, 1885. Here the entire band of young disciples rallied round him and served him with utmost care, love and devotion. Most of them stayed with him day and night. The work was done in the most organised way under the leadership of Narendranath. But the physical condition of the Master made no marked progress. The coming end was apprehended by all. But the Master, though shattered in health, set himself to the task of completing his work with incredible enthusiasm. He distributed his spiritual treasures more and more liberally. The words of wisdom and blessings instinct with the pathos of the approaching end flowed freely from day to day. He watched his disciples more keenly than ever. He gave them all necessary instructions individually as well as collectively. At the

intervals of service he called his young disciples to his side and engaged them in meditation, study, discussion and devotional chants. His unbounded love for them and their whole-hearted devotion to him were manifested in the united service they rendered him in his last and protracted illness, cemented their bonds of mutual love and attraction and laid the foundation of the Brotherhood which was to embody in later days the conjugate ideals of renunciation and service. Besides these spiritual forces working at the basis, the first decisive step towards the formal establishment of the Order was taken by Sri Ramakrishna himself. The oldest member of the group, in consideration of age, was Gopal senior (afterwards Swami Advaitananda). He was so seized with the spirit of renunciation in the divine company of Sri Ramakrishna that he sold all he had, and with the little money thus acquired he intended to distribute some *geruā* (ochre) cloths and *rudrāksha* rosaries to *Sannyāsins* on the occasion of the Gangasagar Mela, a religious fair held every year in the middle of January at the mouth of the Ganges. He expressed his desire to the Master. Pointing to his young disciples Sri Ramakrishna said : "You won't find anywhere better monks than these. So distribute your cloths and things among them." Gopal placed a bundle of ochre cloths at the feet of the Master, who distributed them among his young disciples, Narendra, Rakhal, Yogin, Niranjan, Baburam, Latu and others. One evening the Master made them go through a ceremony and permitted them to receive food from the houses of all irrespective of caste. Once Narendra, Rakhal and a few others were asked by him to take begging bowls and beg their food from door to door. Rakhal and Latu went forth into the neighbourhood of Dakshineswar to beg. They all collected some raw materials which they cooked under the trees in the garden. The food was then offered to the Master. He was glad to take a grain of rice, saying :



"Well done ! The food is very pure." Thus the young men were initiated into monastic life by the Master himself, though the full significance of this step was not realised by them at the time.

Gradually the catastrophe was drawing near. On the morning of the 15th March, just four months before the final event, as Rakhal was shampooing the feet of the Master, he entreated him with the utmost solicitude, saying : "Do speak to the Mother, so that your body may abide some time longer. Pray, do not leave us behind." Sri Ramakrishna replied : "The Mother shall do Her will." "Your will has become one with the Mother's," interrupted Narendra. "Yes, it is lost in the Mother's. I cannot find it out," replied Sri Ramakrishna. The devotees did not press the point further. Rakhal's understanding of the Master's personality was as deep as his love for him. One evening while talking with M., author of *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, and Sasi (afterwards Swami Ramakrishnananda) on the Master's spiritual greatness, he thus expressed his views of the Master : "He is like a tower from which everything can be watched and known but which none can approach or reach."

Sri Ramakrishna passed away on the 16th of August in the year 1886. The disappearance of the Master created a profound void in the hearts of the disciples which nothing but the direct vision of the Eternal Spirit could fill up. They became restless for the realisation of God. An intense *Vairāgya* seized them all. Rakhal and four other *Gurubhāis* went to Brindaban to find immediate solace in the holy associations of the place.

About a month after the disappearance of the Master, a house was engaged at Baranagore, where the first monastery of the Ramakrishna Order was started with Gopal senior who had already renounced the world. In a short time Narendra, Sasi, Sarat, Baburam and Niranjan abandoned their homes and became its permanent inmates. Rakhal,

Kali and Tarak returned from Brindaban in the course of a few months and joined the monastery. Latu and Yogin followed them in a year. The rest of the young disciples, Sarada, Subodh, Gangadhar, Hari and Tulasi, shortly reinforced the number, which rose to sixteen. The holy relics of the Master were preserved in the monastery and a regular worship of him as the *Guru* was instituted according to the rules enjoined in the *Shāstras*.

The entire brotherhood was inspired by the one supreme ideal of God-realisation set up before it by the Master. Fired with zeal for the beatific vision, they not only forsook their homes but severed all earthly relationships. With extreme difficulty they subsisted on the generosity of a lay disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. All thoughts of food and raiment were drowned in the all-absorbing passion for God-vision. Days and nights passed in prayer, meditation, worship, study, discussion, sacred chants, fasts, vigils and vows. The slanders and threats of the outside world and the entreaties of parents and friends to go back home, all went unheeded. One day Rakhal's father came to the Baranagore Math to persuade him to return home. But Rakhal silenced him with these words : "Why do you take so much trouble to come to me? I am quite happy here. Now bless me that I may forget you and you may forget me."

Naren was the central figure of the group. His striking personality, intense love for the *Gurubhāis* and inspiring words of renunciation kept the fire incessantly burning within them. Rakhal's attraction for Naren had always been intense and regardful. At the feet of the Master, the friendship of their early age had been fused with the most exalted sentiments of mutual appreciation, faith and respect. One of the younger *Gurubhāis* was once inclined to return home. Rakhal, who was lovingly called by Narendra and the rest of the *Gurubhāis* their 'Raja', dissuaded him, saying : "Why do you want to go home? Where will you go leaving Naren? Have you ever found

so much love anywhere else? I can also live at home if I like. Why have I been lying here? It is for the supreme love of Naren."

True to the trust placed in him by the Master on the eve of his passing away to take care of his children and train them as monks so as to form the new order of *Sannyāsins* conceived and inaugurated by himself, Naren proposed to his *Gurubhāis* that they should perform the ceremony of formal *Sannyāsa*. It was accordingly performed and Sri Ramakrishna's disciples came to be known by their monastic names. Rakhai became Swami Brahmananda, Yogin Swami Yogananda, Baburam Swami Premananda, Sasi Swami Ramakrishnananda, Hari Swami Turiyananda, and so on. After the ceremony Naren read out to the *Gurubhāis* the dialogue of Yajñavalkya and Maitreyi from the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upanishad*. In the course of a few months they grew tired of living in a fixed place together. Their hearts were panting for solitary *Tapasyā* and unrestrained freedom of itinerant life. Rakhai who was pre-eminently disposed to solitary meditation, expressed off and on a deep longing to undergo severe austerities and make an intense struggle for the realisation of God. He often thought of going to the sacred and quiet banks of the Narbada and plunging into deep meditation there, forgetting the outside world. Not a year passed after the disappearance of the Master, when many of the disciples left the monastery one by one to strike out into the unknown paths of the *Parivṛājaka* life. Only Sasi (Swami Ramakrishnananda) with a few of his *Gurubhāis* remained in the Math beside the sacred relics of the Master.

Swami Brahmananda set out on the *Parivṛājaka* life in the latter part of 1889. He was accompanied by Swami Subodhananda. They first went to Benares and lived in a solitary garden. There the Maharaj (the term by which he was henceforth designated by the followers of Sri Ramakrishna) used to

live on one meal a day, begging his food generally from the *Chhatras*. He practised meditation and *Japa* till about 3 o'clock in the morning. He also read religious books. After a month's stay there, they proceeded towards the Narbada and gradually reached Omkarnath where they remained for about a fortnight. There also the Maharaj practised hard *Tapasyā*. Then they went to Nasik and stopped there for three days. Their next destination was Bombay, where they lived for a fortnight on *mādhukari bhikshā*, i.e., morsels of food collected by door-to-door begging in the same way as bees gather honey from flower to flower. At Bombay they boarded the steamer for Dwarka, which they reached in three days. There is a river there called Gomti, where the pilgrims used to bathe as an act of religious merit; but each of them had to pay a tax of rupees two for this privilege. The Maharaj refused to pay the tax and he held that the sea was much holier than the river. And although a merchant pilgrim offered to pay for him, still he went to the sea for his bath and not to the river. The merchant also did the same. The merchant was so struck by the spiritual grandeur of the Maharaj that he invited him to his place for meal, and when he went there, he and his family worshipped him with flowers and sandal paste and gave him a copy of the *Bhagavat Gītā*. He entertained him with a sumptuous feast. For three days he served him in this way. He was a very big merchant and had agents in many parts of India. He offered the Maharaj letters of introduction to those agents so that they might take care of him whenever he visited those places. But the Maharaj refused them, and said that he did not require them and that the Lord in whose name he had renounced the world would Himself look after him. The merchant also offered him some money so that he could travel in a carriage. But this also he refused. He said: "I want neither money nor carriage; I shall walk." Next they

visited Bet-Dwarka. While returning from there the Maharaj felt hungry and sent Swami Subodhananda to beg some dates from a *Dharamshālā* (rest-house). The people there gave him some four seers of dates. When Swami Subodhananda brought them to the Maharaj, the Maharaj asked him to return the greater part of the dates, but the people at *Dharamshālā* refused to take them back. So he kept only two *chatāks* of dates and distributed the rest among the poor. On returning from Bet-Dwarka they stayed another four days at Dwarka, after which they went to Porbander. There they stayed in a *Dharmashālā*, where the Maharaj was visited by many people and held conversations with them on many religious topics. After staying about four days at Porbander, they went to Junagad. From there they went to Girnar hill. Then they went to Ajmere and thence to Pushkar, where they lived about a fortnight. Their next place of visit was Brindaban. There they resided in Kala Babu's *Kunja*, the temple established by the ancestors of Babu Balaram Bose, the great householder devotee of Sri Ramakrishna.

At Brindaban the Maharaj practised very hard austerities. He lived generally on *mādhukari-bhikshā*. For many days he took only one meal in twenty-four hours. He used no shoes. He had no warm clothings for the winter. The *Vaishnava* saint Vijaykrishna Goswami was then at Brindaban. He had visited Sri Ramakrishna many times at Dakshineswar and had great admiration for him and his disciples. He often enquired about the Maharaj and occasionally invited him to dine in his place. One day he offered him a mosquito curtain, having come to know that the Maharaj had none to protect himself from the swarms of mosquitoes which infested the place. The Maharaj once made a short trip to Muttra with Vijaykrishna Goswami and his party.

The Maharaj used to get up at midnight and practise meditation and *Japa* till morning. At this Swami Subodhananda once said to him : "The Master

looked upon you as his son. You are the veritable son of the Lord. It does not become you to sit up like a beggar seeking His grace." The Maharaj replied : "What you say, brother, is true. The Master loved us so dearly that he gave us everything he had to give. Still we have not attained Peace. This shows that it now lies with us to do the rest for the fulfilment of the life's object. Uddhava was Sri Krishna's dear friend, yet Sri Krishna said to him : 'If you want to properly realise any spiritual truth, you must go to some solitary place in the Himalayas and practise *Tapasyā*. I can grant you some miraculous visions, if you like. But that won't be enough. It is much greater to contemplate and meditate on Him.' Indeed, without meditation and contemplation none can know anything about God." Pressed with the thirst for God the Maharaj often went from village to village in Brindaban, in the spirit of the cowherds of Vraja searching for Sri Krishna in the agony of separation. As he walked, he would at times become so immersed in the thought of God as to forget where he was and where he had been proceeding to. He felt no inclination to take food. And the night was occasionally passed under the tree.

But his spirit of renunciation and craving for solitary spiritual practice did not allow him to settle long at Brindaban. In the latter part of 1890 he went to Kankhal, a more quiet and sequestered place on the bank of the Ganges at the foot of the Himalayas, which has been famous as a peaceful retreat for *Sādhus* from time immemorial. But he had not stayed long at Kankhal when Swami Vivekananda, accompanied by Swami Turiyananda and Swami Saradananda, whom he had met in the course of his travels in the Himalayas, came to see him on his way down to the plains. From Kankhal they all went together to Meerut via Saharanpur to meet Swami Akhandananda, who had preceded them thither on account of illness. They reached Meerut late in the autumn of

1890. In a few days Swami Advaitananda (Gopal senior) also came to Meerut and joined the party. Once again the *Gurubhāis* were exceedingly happy in one another's company and lived together in Meerut for more than three months. They spent the days in meditation, study, discussion and devotional songs as in the Baranagore Monastery. One day, in the latter part of January, Swami Vivekananda gave out to his brother-monks that he would again turn a solitary monk. Accordingly he went to Delhi leaving them behind. The *Gurubhāis*, unwilling to miss his blessed company, followed him thither shortly. But the Swami again requested them to leave him alone, as he wanted to pursue his course without the least hindrance. Even the attraction of his *Gurubhāis* was considered by him a bonadage. So he bade them farewell and left Delhi.

After the Swami's departure, Swami Brahmananda intended to make a pilgrimage to Jwalamukhi in the Punjab and asked Swami Turiyananda whether he was willing to accompany him. Swami Turiyananda readily agreed. They visited Jwalamukhi and travelled over many places in the Punjab for nearly two years, such as Kangra, Pathankot, Baijnath, Gopalpur, Guzranwala, Montgomery and Multan. As they did much of the journey on foot, they stayed for short or long periods in various places which they found suitable for the practice of *Sādhanā*. During the travel Swami Turiyananda had a serious attack of fever and was nursed back to health with much care and difficulty.

From the Punjab they moved to Karachi. Then they went to Bombay. From there they proceeded to Mount Abu in Rajputana and remained there for some time. At Mount Abu the Maharaj practised intense *Tapasyā*. The place is famous for a beautiful Jaina temple and is also sacred to the Hindus. It is a fine resort of *Sādhus*. When Swami Vivekananda was going to Khetri from Madras on the eve of his departure for America in May, 1893, he

unexpectedly met his two *Gurubhāis* at Abu Road Station. The Swami was exceedingly glad to meet his beloved brother-disciples immediately before his journey to distant America. His feelings were roused. And he expressed to them his deep agony of mind at the sight of the dire distress of his countrymen during his travels throughout India. To alleviate their sufferings and to save India were what virtually possessed him now. He said to his *Gurubhāis*: "I have now travelled all over India and lately in the Maharashtra country and the Western coasts. But alas, it was an agony to me, my brothers, to see with my own eyes the terrible poverty and the misery of the masses, and I could not restrain my tears. It is now my firm conviction that it is futile to preach religion among them without first trying to remove their poverty and their sufferings. It is for this reason,—to find some means for the salvation of the poor of India—that I am now going to America." The preaching of religion was not the Swami's main object in attending the Parliament of Religions in Chicago. He spoke of it to his *Gurubhāis* in such a way as if he knew beforehand that it was all for him. He further said: "Whether I understand religion or not, this (*touching his heart by the hand*) is expanding immensely by witnessing the condition of the miserable, downtrodden and ignorant people." These passionate statements of the Swami made a deep impression on the minds of Swami Brahmananda and Swami Turiyananda, who were importuned by him to return to the Math and help him in the great cause of the regeneration of India. Not long after they met Swami Akhandananda in Rajputana, to whom they communicated these words of Swami Vivekananda. The very report of the moving words and sentiments of the Swami so influenced Swami Akhandananda that he at once decided to devote himself to the service of the people of India. As early as 1894 he conceived the idea of opening schools for the backward masses and corresponded with the Swami and his

brother-disciples for their approval of his intention.

From Mount Abu Swami Brahma-nanda accompanied by Swami Turiya-nanda went to Ajmere and visited the sacred *Tirtha* Pushkar a second time. Next they came to Brindaban. There they underwent intense *Tapasyâ* generally at Kusumsarowar in the countryside. Though they lived together, yet each remained so rapt in his own spiritual mood that no words would pass between them sometimes for a week or more. After six months' stay at Brindaban they went to Lucknow. It was now more than five years that they had been absent from the Math. At Lucknow Swami Shivananda (the present President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission), on his way to Kedarnath, came to meet them under instruction from Swami Vivekananda to send them to the Monastery at Calcutta. But they still wanted to live the life of wandering monks for some time more. So after staying nearly six months at Lucknow they came to Fyzabad, where there was a Bengali lawyer who possessed many religious books. They stayed with him evidently to study those books. On his way back from Kedarnath Swami Shiva-

nanda came and met them at Fyzabad. Then they came back to the Math before the winter of 1894-95.

The Math had been transferred from Baranagore to Alumbazar about the end of 1892. Here, too, the Maharaj continued his spiritual practices in the same strain. During the daytime he was mostly engaged in telling his beads. In these days his appearance was remarkably sober and serene. An ineffable radiance shone over his face. His eyes were wonderfully lustrous. His very person seemed to emanate spirituality. Several young ardent souls had by this time joined the Monastery attracted by the all-renouncing ideals of Sri Ramakrishna and his disciples. Many other earnest seekers of truth occasionally came to the Math to associate with the monks. The Maharaj would often sing to those who came in close contact with him devotional songs in a rapturous mood. One of his favourite songs in those days began as follows (we give an English rendering): "Pledge the very life, O mind. Can gems be found in ankle-deep water? Dive into the bottomless depths, if you want to take hold of the Real Man."

(To be continued)

## PROFESSOR BENOY KUMAR SARKAR ON MODERN ECONOMIC LIFE

BY SHIV CHANDRA DATTA, M.A., B.L., F.R. ECON. S.

### LEADERS IN THE ECONOMIC WORLD

The discovery of steam and its application to the textile industry in England in the eighteenth century marked the advent of modern industrialism. Hence England is the pioneer in the establishment of modern economic life (*Arthik Unnati*, 1880, p. 850). Subsequently the U.S.A. and Germany followed in the footsteps of Great Britain and gradually shaped their economic life more or less after the pattern of Great Britain. These

three countries occupy to-day the first rank in the modern world ('a trio of the first class') as regards economic achievements. France follows just a little behind. There are many European countries whose achievements are as remarkable as those of the four just mentioned, but who are insignificant because of their smallness. These are Switzerland, Belgium, Norway, and Sweden. Japan, Russia and Italy occupy the second rank in the industrial and economical world. Countries like Turkey, the Balkans,

India, etc. are gradually evolving their economic life along the lines chalked out by the pioneer nations of the industrial world. (*Greetings to Young India*, p. 66).

There is a constant change and flux in the respective positions of those countries. Countries which were very backward at one time, are advancing at almost breakneck speed, while countries once advanced are proceeding slowly. Prof. Sarkar points out that about 1875 Germany was behind Great Britain by about forty or fifty years. But in about 1914 Germany had almost overtaken her and 'was indeed on the point of crossing her'. Japan was fifty years behind Eur-America in about 1886. But in 1929 Japan has reached the stage at which Eur-America was in about 1905. Russia after the War was very much behind Eur-America. But to-day Russia has almost caught up to the pioneer races in point of economic achievements. (*The Journal of the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce*, Vol. III, pp. 140, 142-143).

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF MODERN ECONOMIC LIFE

Prof. Sarkar makes a clear-cut distinction between mediaeval, agrarian and semi-feudal economic life and modern economic life. What are the characteristics, then, which distinguish modern economic life? These are to be found scattered in various places in his speeches and writings. We present them here in a systematic form for the enlightenment of the reader :

##### 1. THE UTILIZATION OF THE NATURAL FORCES

The modern age tries to economize human energy as much as possible and to utilize natural forces in place of human energy in the work of production, transportation, etc. The beginning was made with steam. From steam the moderns have proceeded to the utilization of petrol and electricity. The use of electricity is still in its infancy and there are undreamt-of possibilities before

it. "Since the year 1918, the world's use of electric current has been almost quadrupled. And yet, the age of electricity has only just begun. Whether we turn to the railways, to agriculture or to the household, we find electrification still in its infancy, while as a means of communication, whether by cable or by wireless, electricity opens out a limitless prospect of development." (*J. B. N. C.*, Vol. II, p. 175).

##### 2. PUTTING EVERY BIT OF MATERIAL TO THE BEST POSSIBLE USE

The fundamental impulse that seems to urge modern mankind in its activities is that Nature is to be made to serve man as a master in the latter's efforts for the satisfaction of his diverse material wants. (*Vartaman Jagat*, Volume on Japan, p. 297). Hence not only are the forces of Nature being utilized, but man is producing the most valuable commodities from the ordinary raw materials. The achievements of modern scientists have made possible the utilization of ordinary raw materials in ways undreamt-of by our forefathers. Valuable and various dyes are being extracted from coal, artificial silk (the manufacture of artificial silk is a thriving industry in Great Britain, Germany, etc.) is being manufactured from wood-pulp, salt-petre is being manufactured from the air, and so on. The manufacture of artificial pearl is another example of the same type of endeavour. The zest of modern man is so keen and his capacity so unique for the profitable utilization of every bit of material, that there is hardly anything in modern industry that can be regarded waste product. (*Vartaman Jagat*, Vol. II, p. 585). To the modern industrialist nothing is worthless enough to be thrown away.

##### 3. COMPETITION

Competition is no mean feature of modern industrial life. The number and variety of industries in the modern world are almost countless. Numerous companies or firms participate in each

particular industry in each country. Hence, each particular company has to compete with rivals both within and outside the country, in selling its products either in the home market or abroad. This competition has been made the keener because of the growing industrialization of the backward countries during and after the War. Keen competition also prevails among the labourers, among the capitalists, among the different nations and also between the labourers on the one hand and the capitalists on the other.

#### 4. CO-OPERATION OF VARIOUS TYPES— INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION— WORLD ECONOMY<sup>1</sup>

Co-operation on a vast scale never before realized in the past history of the world, forms a no less important feature of modern economic life. Labourers to-day organize themselves in trade-unions, and nation-wide as well as international organizations. Big industries combine and co-operate on a national and even an international scale when they find that competition leads them to loss and ruin and co-operation to greater efficiency as well as less struggle. The various states of the world are co-operating internationally for various economic purposes. The various commercial treaties, the customs-unions, the schemes of preferential tariffs, etc. are illustrations of international economic co-operation among the various states. (*Political Philosophies since 1905*, p. 248). The League of Nations with its economic counterparts—the International Economic Conference and the International Labour Conference—also illustrate the same economic co-operation. International Conferences like the various International Monetary Conferences (1872, 1881, and 1892), the World Congress on Population (1927) and Conference on the Scientific Management of Labour (1927) are also tangible embodi-

ments of the efforts for international economic co-operation. (*Political Philosophies since 1905*, pp. 79 and 240).

The vastness of the import and export trades of the modern world, the dependence of the backward countries upon the advanced ones for most, if not all, of their finished products, the dependence of the advanced ones upon the backward countries for most of their food-stuffs and raw materials, the dependence of the advanced countries upon each other for various finished goods, raw materials and services, etc. constitute another notable aspect of the vast scale of modern international economic co-operation. The economic tie between the various parts of the modern world have already become so tight and their economic relations so intimate that we may say that leaving the stages of domestic, village or national economy far behind us, we are living right in the midst of what is understood by world economy. This stage of world economy represents another element in the internationalism in modern economic life.<sup>2</sup>

#### 5. THE INCREASING USE OF MACHINERIES

The modern era is 'the era of machines'.<sup>3</sup> In modern factories almost

<sup>2</sup> The help that the backward countries of to-day have been taking at every step from foreign capital, foreign experts, and foreign example constitutes another no insignificant item in international economic co-operation. American leadership has been modernizing China, and India is being modernized by the British. Japan has sat at the feet of Euro-American nations for decades together in order to learn the processes of modernizing her economic life. Russia and Turkey have been mainly taking the help of Germany (though they do not neglect the help of others) for the speedy industrialisation of their country. The Balkan States have been borrowing foreign capital for their industrialisation. The rationalisation of German industries after the War has been mainly effected with American capital. Russia also is trying to get foreign capital to modernize her economic life. (These are some of the numerous examples occurring in Prof. Sarkar's speeches and writings).

<sup>3</sup> J. B. N. C., Vol. II, p. 171.

<sup>1</sup> On this topic Chap. 17 of Prof. Sarkar's *Greetings to Young India* will be found useful and informative.

everything is done with the help of machines. Prof. Sarkar mentions that on his visit to the Clarendon Press in England he was struck with the sight of so many machineries that he felt himself present in the midst of a vast laboratory of machines. (*Vartaman Jagat*, Vol. II, p. 345). In connection with his visits to the many paper factories, weaving factories, tailoring factories and steel works in England, he remarks that in modern factories about everything is done with machines and that very little has got to be done by the human hand. The human hand has got only to put in the raw materials at one end and take out the finished products at the other. New machines are being constantly invented in the modern world, e.g., electrical machines with the discovery of electricity. The efficiency of the old machines also is being daily enhanced, e.g., the 70 p.c. increase in the efficiency of the sewing machines in post-War Germany.<sup>4</sup> The machine-building industry is itself a great and expanding industry in almost every advanced country. In Germany the machine-building industry is the third in importance and employs 16 lakhs of labourers.<sup>5</sup>

In 1914 Prof. Sarkar was a half-hearted admirer of modern machineries. At that time he used to think that machineries make slaves of the labourers. (*Vartaman Jagat*, Vol. II, pp. 491, 575, 611). But recently his views have undergone an almost revolutionary transformation. At present he is of opinion that machines serve as a powerful tonic for the purification of the national blood and that the greater the absorption of machineries in the national system, the stronger will the country be.

#### 6. LARGE SCALE PRODUCTION AND WIDELY EXTENDED DIVISION OF LABOUR

Production in the modern world refers mainly to large scale production on the basis of a widely extended

division of labour and with the help of machineries at almost every stage of production. Small scale production is more an exception than the rule and exists in those industries only which are not susceptible of large scale production. The movement for large scale production has in recent times taken the shape of that for Trustification because of the Rationalization made possible through production on a larger scale. The urge behind the movement for Trustification is that of the cheapening of goods because of the lower costs of production. Trustification also implies the capacity to spend lavishly for research and experiment. (*Economic Development*, pp. 62 and 63). The movement for Trustification, already common in the U.S.A., received a tremendous fillip in post-War Germany owing to the very calamitous condition of the various industries which felt compelled to amalgamate in order (a) to prevent competition, (b) to gain the benefits of the lower costs of production brought about by more intensive specialization among the amalgamating factories and (c) to attract capital from the U.S.A. and also from within Germany.<sup>6</sup> Trustification has also proceeded apace in Soviet Russia where in various industries numerous giant state trusts exist to-day. (*J. B. N. C.*, Vol. II, pp. 1-27). The movement for Trustification is also making headway in Great Britain. (*J. B. N. C.*, Vol. IV, p. 11).

One of the best illustrations of Trustification is that of the Siemens Rheinelbe Schuckert-Union in Germany which is a huge vertical and horizontal trust which produces coal, ore, wrought iron, plate, rolled wire and tube, machine tools, screws, rivets, springs, knobs, studs, railway materials, automobiles, carriages, boats, electricity, etc. and which employs about 2 lakhs of workers. (*Economic Development*, pp. 60 to 62). The steel trust established in Germany

<sup>4</sup> *J. B. N. C.*, Vol. II, p. 171.

<sup>5</sup> *J. B. N. C.*, Vol. II, p. 165.

<sup>6</sup> *J. B. N. C.*, Vol. II, pp. 1-27 and *Arthik Unnati*, Vol. I, pp. 834-838.



in 1926 controls about 50 p.c. of the steel produced in that country. (*J. B. N. C.*, Vol. II, p. 168).

Prof. Sarkar draws our attention to the following advantages of Trustification: (1) it lowers prices because of the allotment of different kinds of production among the various factories and also because of the shutting down of the inefficient ones; and (2) it helps to partially solve the problem of industrial crises by making it possible for the persons in control of the industries to prevent greater production than what the market can consume, etc. At the same time Trustification is shown to be bringing many evils in its train: (1) the trusts constitute a sort of economic imperialism, 'an empire of industries' so to say, where the industrial magnets at the head have every opportunity of compelling the consumers to pay cut-throat prices because of the monopolistic nature of their control; and (2) that, in future, when Trustification has been well established, the constructive powers now called forth in their establishment may cease to appear and the incentive for progress and invention may disappear giving place to routine work and clerical labour. But he points out that this danger has already attracted the notice of the Westerners and that they are already up and doing in finding measures for meeting this evil. (*Arthik Unnati*, Vol. I, pp. 859-61). The first evil also is being sought to be removed through anti-trust legislation and public ownership of or public control over important industries.<sup>7</sup>

#### 7. THE COMPLEXITY OF MODERN PRODUCTIVE PROCESSES

Modern production is a very complex process involving the co-operation of various agents. Those referred to by Prof. Sarkar are the following: (1) The technical function. "Herein lie the production, manufacture and transforma-

tion of one kind of goods into another, including the utilization of waste products." (2) The commercial function. "It comprises sale, purchase, exchange, etc. of the wares on the most convenient terms." (3) The financial function. "How to attract and command capital to an enterprise constitutes a tremendous factor in economic development. Here one touches the sphere of credit and banking." (4) Insurance. "In modern times the security of goods and persons has moreover become an essential necessity. Not only have the commodities to be insured against waste, loss, destruction, etc., but the working men also must be assured the wages and means of combating insanitary conditions, accident, old age and death." (5) Accounts. "Accounts play a mighty role in the history of every factory, trading house or other undertaking. One has to be on the look-out for the periodically regular statistics of prices, wages, costs and output as well as the exact schedule of goods, markets, bank-rates, balances, and so forth." (6) The administrative function. "The functions of the economic general staff in each enterprise consist not only in giving the right 'officer' the right place but also in mobilizing the right classes of 'men'—the hands and feet—for the discharge of their proper functions." (7) Chemical engineering. The struggle for supremacy between Chemists and Engineers has been removed by the creation a new class of technical experts called Chemical Engineers. Chemical engineering is playing a mighty role in modern production. (8) Industrial research. "The vital problem in this domain is essentially one of inventing and instituting the necessary economics so that goods may be delivered at the lowest price-level and with as little waste of human energy as possible." "Industrial research has been achieving wonderful results in human inventiveness and brain-power. But these acquire a significance solely because they serve to make the life of the people, the teeming millions, less

<sup>7</sup> *Political Philosophies since 1905*, pp. 79 and 210 and *Vartaman Jagat*, Vol. II, p. 601.

disagreeable and more happy." (*Economic Development*, Ch. 45).

#### 8. THE RISE AND ADVANCE OF THE MODERN WORKING CLASSES

The birth of the modern working classes out of lethargic, sluggish and superstition-ridden mediaeval peasants and the gradual advance made by them constitute another important characteristic of modern economic life. The organization, the discipline and the training imposed on the working classes while working in close mutual proximity in huge modern factories equipped with high class instruments and machines, have sharpened their intelligence, and called forth and developed their capacity to act in a disciplined and organized manner. These qualities have enabled the modern working classes, at one time occupying the lowest state in social life, to demand and obtain better treatment from the society, the state and their employers. Hence, the modern world, in spite of its present capitalistic basis, records an advance on the part of the working classes.<sup>a</sup> Labourers to-day have been endowed with the power of managing their factories along with their employers in Germany, Austria, and Czecho-Slovakia. (*Political Philosophies since 1905*, p. 216). They are sharing in the profits of industrial enterprises in New Zealand simply because their contribution is manual just as that of the shareholders is financial. (*J. B. N. C.*, Vol. I, p. 529). The syndicates in Italy have been endowed with the power of entering into collective agreements with the employers and of controlling their own affairs, the state reserving to itself

the power to intervene in case of disagreement between the employers and the employed and to frame general legislation. (*Political Philosophies since 1905*, pp. 288 and 289). And this tendency of sharing in profits and in the management of factories has also shown itself in the U.S.A. and Great Britain. (*Arthik Unnati*, Vol. I, pp. 156-157).

#### 9. INCREASING URBANISATION

The increase in the number and size of modern cities of the class of London, New York, Berlin, Paris, Chicago, Manchester, Birmingham, Glasgow, etc. and the conversion of rural centres into municipal towns are another feature of modern industrial life. Cities with vast populations, with up-to-date means of communication and transportation, with modern comforts, luxuries and amusements did not exist before the advent of modern industrialism either in the East or in the West. (*Arthik Unnati*, Vol. I, p. 351). They have developed wherever modern commerce and industry have established themselves and they are conspicuous by their absence in countries or tracts which still exist in mediaeval economic conditions. The origin of modern cities thus is solely due to modern industry and trade, e.g., the development of the town of Manchester<sup>a</sup> is due to the cotton industry and the cotton trade, that of Glasgow is due to the development of the ship-building industry (before the Industrial Revolution both Manchester and Glasgow were but petty and insignificant towns—*Vartaman Jagat*, Vol. II, pp. 514, 515 and 590). Osaka is characterised by Prof. Sarkar as 'the Manchester of Asia'. The reasons why Osaka has grown to its present importance are: (a) coal and iron are available near at hand in the Kiuchiu

<sup>a</sup> Cf. in this connection the nine principles of labour adopted by the League of Nations in 1919: (1) labour not a mere commodity; (2) right of association among both employers and employees; (3) wages adequate to maintain a reasonable standard of life; (4) eight-hour day; (5) weekly rest of 24 hours; (6) abolition of child labour; (7) equality between men and women re. payment; (8) equitable treatment of employees; and (9) inspection in which women are to take part.

<sup>a</sup> Prof. Sarkar points out very felicitously that Manchester is the centre of British industrialism, the home of British Socialism and the stronghold of the British co-operative movement. (*Vide Vartaman Jagat*, Vol. II, p. 614).

Islands; (b) goods can easily pass by the canals; and (c) the Chinese and Korean markets are near at hand. (*Vartaman Jagat*, Volume on Japan, p. 879).

Modern cities have given rise to new social, economic and sanitary problems. But these also are being tackled very ably by the moderns. Modern housing schemes, modern town-planning systems (endeavouring, among other objects, to preserve rural features in urban surroundings) and the variety of functions undertaken by modern municipalities (e.g., those undertaken by the Manchester municipality—the running of tram-cars and electricity and gas-works, construction of better houses, providing free soap and water for unclean children, compulsory inspection of unclean children, erection of ideal wards, establishment of convenient hotels for sojourners in the town, subsidizing societies for child welfare, etc.)<sup>10</sup> show the heroic determination of modern Eur-Americans not to be baffled by any evil however great.

#### THE FOUNDATIONS OF MODERN ECONOMIC LIFE

What are the factors which have raised the economic life of the modern countries to the level at which it exists to-day?

Prof. Sarkar lays stress on three great factors: (A) the efforts of the state (especially in the shape of advanced economic legislation), (B) the development of banking, and (C) the existence of a wide-spread system of technical, commercial and agricultural education.

The third factor will be discussed elaborately in a separate article. Here we shall consider only the first two factors.

#### (A) THE EFFORTS OF THE STATE

Prof. Sarkar is not unmindful of the part played by resourceful individuals in the up-building of modern economic life.

<sup>10</sup> *Vartaman Jagat*, Vol. II (on Great Britain), pp. 594–599.

He himself is in favour of private initiative and approves of Governmental interference in matters which cannot possibly be cared for by private individuals. (*Greetings to Young India*, p. 150). But, his work, *Economic Development* is but one long song of praise of the very great part modern states are playing in the economic betterment of their respective countries.

The economic activities of the modern state as pointed out by Prof. Sarkar are manifold and may be classified as under

#### (i) THE STATE AND INDUSTRIES

The modern state tries to help industries by protecting them from forceful competition either by imposing duties on goods imported from abroad or by conferring bounties on goods produced within the country. It also tries to oust the foreigners from control over industries within the country (C/. Turkey's success in reducing foreign control over her railways, banks and shipping—*Economic Development*, Ch. 84). But at the same time it does not hesitate to take foreign help whenever, wherever and to whatever extent necessary to push on the economic development of the country. The Japanese Government did not hesitate to take the help of foreign experts in order to train up the Japanese in the arts of modern agriculture, industry and banking. The Russian Government, while trying to be exclusive and self-sufficient, has found it to her interest to permit foreign firms to participate in her international trade (*Economic Development*, p. 119) and also to establish factories within her borders (*Economic Development*, p. 117). The post-War development of the mercantile marine in Italy is the achievement of the Mussolinian Government. (*Economic Development*, pp. 256 and 257).

The state has been acting as a mighty agent in the industrialization of countries like Russia, Japan, etc. Russia is being rapidly industrialized to-day by the autocratic and centralized

Russian State. (J. B. N. C., Vol. III, pp. 141-148). Japan, which was almost a nonentity in the international stage till the end of the nineteenth century, established her claim to the rank of a first class power after the Russo-Japanese war in 1905, simply because of the process of modernization that had been set on foot by the Japanese Government since 1868. The Japanese Government helped in modernizing Japan chiefly in the following ways : (a) by enlisting the services of foreign experts for short periods (Prof. Sarkar noted during his visit to Japan in 1915-16 that the number of foreign experts had very much dwindled by that time); (b) by sending students, bank officials, etc. for the best training in Eur-America; and (c) by starting new industries and then handing them over to private individuals. (*Vartaman Jagat*, Volume on Japan).

#### (ii) THE STATE AND AGRICULTURE

The modern state is trying to improve agriculture (a) by introducing better land-laws in order to deprive the landlords of their lands and then to distribute them among the peasants (e.g., in Germany, Denmark, Great Britain, the states of Central and South-eastern Europe); (b) by extending the use of electricity in the villages (e.g., in France); (c) by establishing experimental stations to demonstrate up-to-date methods of cultivation to the peasants (e.g., in Japan); (d) by establishing intimate relationship between agricultural schools, colleges and universities on the one hand and the practical farmers on the other (e.g., in Great Britain); (e) by extending financial help to the agriculturists through the medium of Co-operative Societies or otherwise (e.g., in France, Bulgaria; proposal of such state help in Great Britain—vide *Economic Development*, pp. 864, 866); (f) by protecting the industries which utilize the raw materials produced by the farmers and thereby indirectly helping agriculture (e.g., the protection of the sugar industry in Hungary has

enabled the sugar manufacturers to settle minimum prices with the beet-growers and also to extend large premiums to them—*Economic Development*, p. 306); (g) by promoting agricultural research; (h) by importing the best agricultural knowledge from abroad (e.g., in Japan).

#### (iii) THE STATE AND TRADE

The modern state tries to encourage export trade by conferring bounties on the producers, by standing guarantee for loans to producers, and by extending loans to the exporters (Cf. the Overseas Trades Acts and the Trade Facilities Acts of Great Britain—*Arthik Unnati*, Vol. I, pp. 154-155). It tries not only to encourage the export of industrial but also of agricultural products (e.g., in 1924 Hungary was lowering her railway freight rates and began the manufacture of locomotives because of the lack of sufficient rolling stock—in order to push on her exports of agricultural products. Prof. Sarkar also points out that at that time the exportability of agricultural products was being scientifically studied in Hungary—*Economic Development*, pp. 804 and 805). But the export of agricultural products is being encouraged only when the minimum requirements of the country have been satisfied (e.g., Poland had calculated that she required 16 lbs. of sugar per head for home consumption, hence in 1924 export of sugar was allowed only after this minimum quantity had been kept within the country—*Economic Development*, p. 184). The various Exhibitions—local, national and international—which are increasing almost daily in number, vastness and variety, are but an attempt on the part of the state (and also of the Mercantile Associations, Chambers of Commerce, etc. in some cases) to push on both internal and international trade by bringing the buyers and sellers together. Industry and commerce cannot thrive without finance. That finance is provided by banks. In every modern state the banks are subject to

greater or less degree of control by the state.

(iv) THE STATE AND THE EFFICIENCY  
OF THE INDIVIDUAL

The modern states are not merely organizations for the maintenance of peace and order within the community. They are also great social service organizations. (*Vartaman Jagat*, Vol. II, p. 601). No doubt private social service organizations in Eur-America are not few or insignificant. No doubt also that it is these private organizations that very often show the first initiative. But the activities of the modern states in the direction of social service are so vast, so varied and so important that the efforts and achievements of the private organizations pale into insignificance.

The modern state aims at turning every individual into healthy and efficient agent of production in all possible ways. Hence, whatever seems to hamper the efficiency of the individual is promptly removed.

No better illustration can be found of the paternalistic activities of modern states than Germany.

"Germany is the pioneer of industrial insurance." Hence, we first take up the achievements of Germany in that sphere :

"State insurance was completely developed in Germany in the decade between 1881 to 1890. Since then it has comprised three great branches : (1) insurance against sickness; (2) insurance against accidents; and (3) insurance against permanent disablement."

"For the sick insurance (law of 1883) two-thirds are paid by the employees and one-third by the employers. Against old age and disablement (law of 1889) the state bears a part of the burdens of insurance together with the other two parties. But the employers are exclusively responsible for the accident (law of 1884)."<sup>11</sup>

"Within two decades of the legislation Germany had 11½ million people on the sick insurance lists. There were over 28,000 sick benefit societies under imperial or local control, 18½ millions were insured against old age and disablement and 18½ millions against accident. The accident insurance really covered almost one-third of the entire German people."

As regards old age and permanent disablement,—"Two classes of people are compelled to insure : (1) all working men, assistants and apprentices in every branch of trade above the age of 16; (2) employees in offices, engineers and shop-assistants, pilots, also teachers with limited incomes.

"By old age is meant the 70th year. At this age every German obtains from the Government an annual pension of 50 gold marks (Rs. 37) and from the insurance fund a sum not exceeding 280 gold marks (Rs. 170).

"For permanent invalids also the Government's contribution is 50 gold marks per year. From the insurance fund they obtain a sum not exceeding 450 gold marks (Rs. 320).

"Accident includes death. As the problem of the *widow and the orphan* is attended to by this law, one can easily guess what a tremendous *sense of security* and *economic staying power* is felt in everyday life by 83 p.c. of the entire population in Germany.

"In case of the employee's death while at work in a factory, the law provides that the employer is to pay the expenses of the funeral. A pension is also assured to the relatives. The widow obtains 20 p.c. of the actual earnings of the deceased or of the average local wages. Each child until the age of 16 also obtains pension at the same rate." (*Economic Development*, pp. 124-126).

Prof. Sarkar quotes Prof. Schumacher on the effects of industrial insurance in Germany : "The result of all these

<sup>11</sup> So far as accident and sickness insurances are concerned, the Government does not in-

cur any expenditure, but credit is due to the Government for passing the necessary legislations.

measures is that Germany is to-day ahead of all other countries in the matter of arrangements for the protection of life and health. We largely attribute the most remarkable feature in the modern development of our German nation, of modern German life, to this industrial insurance legislation." (*Economic Development*, p. 124).

Industrial Insurance was first introduced in Great Britain by Lloyd George in 1908-1911. His scheme embraced the following items: old age pension, minimum wage, national insurance. (*Political Philosophies since 1905*, p. 206). It was also adopted for the first time in France in 1924.

Other paternalistic activities of the German Government since the War are the following: (a) maintenance of 68,000 cripples, 8,67,000 widows and 1,05,000 orphans; (b) a scheme for spending 600 million gold marks on public works (mostly canalization) in order to prevent unemployment; (c) extension of lavish grants (88 million gold marks) to charitable institutions; (d) helping middle class people in distress by exten-

sion of subsidies, reduction of prices and so on. (*Economic Development*, pp. 112-118).

The various factory laws passed in almost all the modern states for the protection of the labourers and especially for the protection of the women and children represent further endeavours in the same direction.

The achievements of the Italian Government in partially tackling the the problem of malaria with the expenditure of Rs. 56 lakhs per year for 55 years (1886 to 1921), in order to drain or pump vast stretches of unhealthy tracts, even though there was no prospect of any financial return, shows to what extent a modern state can go in order to promote the health of its people. And it is pleasing to reflect that the Italian Government was repaid not only with higher land revenue from the reclaimed tracts but also with the better health and enhanced efficiency and vitality of the men and women of the land who are the source and the creators of wealth. (*Economic Development*, Ch. 18).

(To be concluded)

## THE UPANISADIC VIEW OF TRUTH

BY DR. MAHENDRANATH SIRCAR, M.A., Ph.D.

### INTRODUCTION

The Upanisads deal with and describe the nature of the ultimate reality, the Absolute, not evidently so much by reasoning or dialectics, as by inner experience and realisation. The dialectics are few in the pages of the Upanisads. But they are full of the records of the intuitions and experiences of seers, and these have enriched their value as inspiring texts. Logic may convince us, but intuitions and experiences inspire us. The interest in the Upanisadic study is intensified because of the finer vistas of intuition and feeling they open in the seeker. The correct searchings of the seers, the definite answers to the intensive queries about the ultimate reality,

exhibit the deep and varied spiritual experiences which cannot fail to strike the imagination, excite wonder and admiration and silently inspire the realisation of Truth.

The Upanisads lose their meaning and significance to those who are anxious to find a developed philosophy in them, but when the search changes from a rational enquiry to a mystical penetration, their import and depth are felt and realised. They exhibit the highest intuitions and experiences of spiritual life.

### BRAHMAN

A treatise on mysticism would naturally refuse a categorical setting of the conception about being, and would rather prefer to read the development of the

conception through life's experiences and intuitions, not because it is the demand of the mystic spirit to shut out the intellectual measurement of truth and reality, but because this has been specially the method of pursuing truth in the Upanisads. The Upanisads appeal more by the spiritual intuitions and psychological revelations than by a set form of philosophy, and though they have been the basis of the later philosophies, still it cannot be doubted that in them life and spirit has been of a greater concern than systematisation which has been thrust upon them. The texts read like gospels of revelations and intuitions, and in many places it has been shown how life is felt in its subtle delicacies of movement, and spirit in fine intuitions. And since the inspiration has been direct, logic has hardly a place in the Upanisads, though no doubt they are richly suggestive that way also.

That this is the natural conclusion can hardly admit of any doubt; and when this has been lost sight of and the life's quest has at last its refuge in the intellectual understanding, the Upanisads have been the fruitful ground of combatants, eager to raise side-issues and concentrate their efforts and energies upon them. This demand of logic has risen when it has not been able to follow life's move and intuition in all its phases, and their demand has the invariable effect of confining the spiritual quest to a definite phase of expression. But spiritual life denies in its soaring such confinement most eloquently, for its constant tendency is to feel life and spirit in their fullness and overwhelmingness and not in partiality. The Isa Upanisad has rightly characterised the spirit to be complete and full. And therefore it has been beautifully laid down :

"This is full, that is full, the full originates from the full. When the full is taken away from the full, the full remains."

This couplet expresses the mystic promise in the most effective way. Life is actively energising for the fullness.

Spirit cannot bear division, it cannot tolerate incompleteness. Fullness is its being, and since it is the only being, it cannot conceive the world of spirit either in being or in expression as incomplete and partial. Hence spirit is the fullness of being both in transcendence and in immanence. It is inexhaustible.

The fullness is perceived in the yonder and in the beyond, in the widest expansion and commonalty of spirit, it is perceived in itself beyond expression in transcendence. Life's move is in spirit, its stay is in spirit. Spirit is all, spirit is in all. Spirit is beyond all.

Though the effort has been the presentation of spirit in its fullness, still it has been necessary to conceive the spirit in transcendence, and the spirit in immanence, in reference to the expression or concentration. Spirit-in-itself is transcendent, spirit is immanent in reference to the order of expression.

This has led us to conceive Brahman-in-itself and Brahman-in-relation. The former can be called the Absolute, the latter Isa.

This fullness of transcendence goes beyond the fullness of immanence. Thought and language both fail to understand it and express it. So unique a presentation is this height of existence that there is no means of indicating it save by a negative method and process. The positive intuition of it is impossible. Whatever meets the senses or the intellect, is not Brahman.

Our approach to the study of the Upanisads will be mainly analytical of the spiritual experiences revealed therein. This analytical study can alone find out the most sacred spiritual convictions about the nature of reality.

We can at once see that the conception of the Visvadeva in the Vedas could not satisfy the Upanisadic seers. The reception of the finer vibrations of supramundane life in its wide diffusion in supramental visions, cannot silence the quest of the teachers, for it is supposed to be still external. It can set up fine vital and mental currents, but cannot touch the inmost being in us. The search

in the Upanisads is the search of the inmost being, the being above and beyond the world of revelation, internal and external.

The Upanisads transcend the limits of expressions and realise truth in transcendence of the cosmic stirrings, the vital and mental urges.

Their importance and appeal are enhanced by the reference to the Absolute. The relative world with its vast experiences and possibilities cannot make a lasting claim on our attention, for they are bounded and passing. The relative has a value in so far as it draws our attention to the Absolute by waking up the sense of a contrast. The relative is limited, the relative is transitory. It calls for the unlimited, the permanent, as its background. When the fullest promises of the relative existence have been exhausted, the real search for the Absolute begins; when the delights and joys of the relative order have had their fullest trial, then alone the worth, the value and the meaning of the Absolute as the only enduring can be apparent to us. In this sense the enquiry into the Absolute and the quest of its security of being can seriously begin, only when the satisfactions of the values in the relative order, gross or fine, have had their fullest trial. This is not often clearly understood and the intellectual synthesis of the relative and the Absolute is often attempted. The relative joys and values are given an absolutistic meaning and impress, and the fountain of our experience and life is connected with the absolute spring. Our experience has a demand over us, and life clings to it so keenly that it often refuses to accept the breaking of the continuity between the natural and the supernatural, between the relative and the Absolute.

But this attitude gets a rude shock if a penetration is made into the recesses of our being, where the sense of a freedom at once convinces us of the twofold character of the relative and the absolute existence. This freedom is unique, it is not the freedom of eased mentality and highly strung vitality, it

is not the freedom of an embracing synthesis; it is the freedom from the mutations of life, freedom from the reciprocities of intellectual life, freedom from insistent vital and mental demands. It is the freedom of transcendence.

The Upanisadic search is after the real and the enduring beyond the temporal; this real is Brahman in the Upanisadic terminology. The freedom which awaits the realisation of Brahman is freedom from the relative values and concepts.

The chief attraction of the Upanisads lies in adducing the conception of Brahman as the Absolute. The seers are penetrative enough to go beyond the veil of relative existence to the One Absolute which denies division and completely transcends the relative existence.

The Upanisadic method has been chiefly mystical penetration, and the penetration has been keen enough to reach complete transcendence. The text conceives the vast as the state of existence, from which the relative order of the senses and mentality drops completely.

The Chhândogya has it : "The manifold has been in the beginning as 'Sat' (existent) and the Sat has been one without the second." No doubt, the texts make rich references about the emergence of the cosmic system out of Brahman, but this emergence should not be referred to the Absolute which transcends everything, including the desire and act of creation. The Absolute is. (Katha, II, vi, 12, 13). Nothing more can be said of it, no definition is possible of it, for it is beyond knowledge (Kena, II, 8), beyond any categorical thinking.

"It moves, it moves not, it is far and near, it is in, it is out." The intellectual attempt to positively define it completely fails.

#### WHAT THEN IS BRAHMAN?

The word "Brahman" has been used to indicate the vast, the unbounded,



i.e., the Absolute. In the texts the word has been used in many places identifying it with the forces of nature, the inner psychoses, the vital principle, etc., and this has been perplexing to the accurate study of the Upanisads.

Hence a clear analysis of the passages in which the word occurs is necessary for clarified understanding. The texts use the word in different senses in diverse contexts, and if the context is forgotten, confusion is inevitable.

The understanding is helped at the outset if we remember the doctrine of transcendence and immanence of Brahman as taught in the Upanisads. Brahman is the soul of the appearance, it denies the appearance. It is in it, it is out of it. Such contrarieties are only possible if Brahman is viewed in and without relations to the world of phenomena in the same sense. Immanence of Brahman is relative to the cosmos. Transcendence is not. And, therefore, the passages covering immanence have not the same importance as the passages covering transcendence. This distinction is to be borne in mind to help a clear understanding.

#### SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS DISTINCTION IN SPIRITUAL LIFE

The conception of Brahman in and out of relation to the immanent life has an important significance in spiritual life. It accepts the possibilities of spiritual life and expression in the relative and absolutistic consciousness. The experiences may differ, they may be of different character, they may have different values, but still it cannot be denied that they are potent in life. And intellectual considerations may persuade us to accept the one and deny the other; but such considerations seem to be a categorical determination which has no value in spiritual life. The Upanisads recount the spiritual experiences in life with and without expressions; and if the finality is fixed upon any one of them, it is because the gratification and the blessedness which are the promise of

spiritual urges are more complete in the one than in the other. But this distinction does not take away the full value from the life in its partial expression and incomplete fruition.

The Upanisads are careful to unfold an evolution of spirit in its immanent expression, and since this expression is due to self-alienation of spirit, it can offer only partial satisfaction even in its fullest development.

The spiritual fruition in the Upanisads, therefore, has a twofold meaning. It may mean a self-opening and reception of the cosmic spiritual life through nature and society and in its visitation in the soul.

But this unfolding of spiritual consciousness is evolution in spirituality, but should not be confounded with emancipation in transcendence. The spiritual consciousness in the start is the acceptance of the cosmic life through the fine and the finer planes of existence. It is the stage of the ever expansive dynamism, and so long as the spiritual life energises in the concrete, it enjoys the finer revelations of spirit through nature and soul and yet transcends them in the world of the finest expression in itself. The spiritual vision has in it still the concrete outlook, for experiences, however fine, are still confined to the original limitation of consciousness in expression and immanence. Spiritual life is, therefore, essentially dynamic, and howsoever expansive and rich it may be, it cannot transcend the original restriction. And, therefore, the highest philosophic truth which such experiences can indicate and imply, will be naturally an all-inclusive existence. It lies in everything. It transcends everything, for nothing can exhaust its being. Its being extends far beyond the ethereal expanse, far beyond the highest heavens.

The Svetâsvatara eloquently describes the vision of the all-inclusive spirit in its widest commonalty. The all-pervading spirit is represented as the Cosmic Person, encompassing the endless existence in its embrace ;

"The person with its thousand heads, thousand eyes, thousand feet, surrounds the earth on all sides and stands ten fingers' breadth beyond."

"The person, in truth, this wide world is, whatever has been, and whatever will be; also ruler of immortality, and whatever grows up by food."

"It has a hand and foot on every side, on every side an eye, and head and face, it has an ear everywhere in the world. It stands encompassing all." (Hume's translation of the Svetâsvatara, III, 14, 15, 16).

"The God who is in fire, who is in water, who has entered into the whole world, who is in plants, who is in trees—to that God be adoration, yea, be adoration!" (Svetâsvatara Upanisad, II, 17).

Again we have in the Rik Veda (*Vide* Wilson's Rik Veda Samhitâ, Mandala 10, Eighth Astaka, Fourth Adhyâya, Sukta, VI):

1. "Purusa, who has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet, investing the earth in all directions, exceeds (it by a space) measuring ten fingers.

2. "Purusa is verily all this (visible world), all that is, and all that is to be, he is also the Lord of immortality, for he mounts beyond (his own condition) for the food (of living beings).

3. "Such is his greatness, and Purusa is greater even than this, all beings are one-fourth of him, his other three-fourths (being) immortal, (abide) in heaven.

4. "Three-fourths of Purusa ascended; the other fourth that remained in this world proceeds repeatedly, and diversified in various forms, went into all animate and inanimate creation."

Though these texts eloquently describe the all-permeating nature of the Absolute, in the gross and the finer forms of existence, still they do not give us the conception of transcendence. Hence these texts have value for the spiritual life in initiating the cosmic sense of the cosmic being. They are, in short, the vision of the Reality in forms, or the

vision of the formed reality (Murta), they do not indicate the understanding or the vision of the formless.

The Brihadâranyaka has it: "There are assuredly two forms of Brahman: the formed and the formless, the mortal and the immortal, the stationary and the moving, the actual and the yon." (Hume's Translation, III, 1).

The texts bring out clearly the conception of the formless, which is, therefore, as a conception more advanced and subtle than the presentation of Brahman as Murta. This makes way for the perception of the finest essence of existence immanent in all existence.

But even this is not enough as the true indication of the Upanisadic teaching. For as a source of spiritual inspiration the Upanisads see far beyond such poetic inspiration which feels the animation of nature by spirit, and go deeper in declaring the identity of existence in nature and man.

The spiritual life, therefore, is not merely the reception of spirit in wise passiveness through the finer forces active in nature and man; it is not the sense of the vastness and overpoweringness of existence; it is, as the Brihadâranyaka points out, the feeling of the exact identity of spirit beyond the dynamic of nature and spirit. The text reads: "As an identity is it to be looked upon, this indemonstrable, enduring being; motionless beyond space, the birthless soul, Atman, the great and the enduring."

This perception of the enduring as seated in the soul (*Yo esa antahhridaya*) is the promise of the Upanisads. The self-opening does not only move the fine dynamism of our being making it receptive and responsive to the finer forces active in us and in nature and to their correspondence and unity in the Godhead, but it finally helps that penetration which feels the identity of existence in Atman. The self-opening is succeeded and displaced here by self-realisation, and the finer dancing of life by silence of wisdom. The wisdom which the spiritual dynamism carries with it, is the re-

velation of the finer oscillation of life and spirit in the deep of our being, the subtle joys and music in the life of nature, the rhythm and harmony of the cosmic life in and beyond the formed (Murta) existences. But it is to be distinguished from the wisdom which is obtained in the deep abyss of our being, the knowledge of identity. Transcendent wisdom then presents a unique experience which cannot be otherwise obtained. It is the wisdom of the formless, the shapeless.

In the life of realisation, the Upanisads lay more stress upon the truth of transcendence than upon the immanent spiritual life. It is not because the Upanisadic seers do not see and feel the finer delights and truths of supra-mental existence in the dynamic divine, it is because they feel the truth of all truths, the truth beyond the immanent immensities. The supra-mental truths hold true in the order of expression, and as such are truths which lie beyond the surface existence. They reveal realms of harmonies, beauties and sublimities; but they can have no access into the silence of the Deep. It is beyond the reach of the sensuous or the super-sensuous mind.

The word "truth" is confined to this aspect of transcendence in the Upanisads, both in ontological and spiritual sense. Not that it is the fixity of existence amidst the diversities of changes. The dynamic divine is no less fixed an existence, for no one seriously conceives it to be vanishing into nothing. It might have occasional withdrawal of its expression, but the occasional withdrawal of its play in the cosmic drama does not reduce it to nothing. It is the source and fountain of all life, both streams of thought, wisdom and power, and therefore it will be idle to deny its truth outright and to refuse its spiritual influence and power. But when the emphasis is laid upon the transcendent aspect of truth, it is done in the clear conviction that the transcendent is Truth without the least limitation, it is the sole truth, the bare and the naked truth. The trans-

cendent is truth-in-itself. The dynamic divine is truth in relation to the order of revelation in the supra-physical and physical planes of existence. The truth implied in them cannot be the same. The dynamic divine is truth in relation to the orders of revelation and creation, it cannot be truth in the sense in which the transcendent is truth. But this should not for a moment be construed to thinking that there are two forms of truth, actually different, if not quite conflicting. The transcendent alone is truth, the dynamic divine is the transcendent presented in the aspect of relation. The same thing is seen, but interpreted differently. The intellectual necessity of thinking in the terms of a first cause presents the transcendent as the dynamic divine manifested in mental and supra-mental universe, in the physical and the vital planes of existence. But when the intellectual curiosity is displaced by truth-vision, the distinctness, native to conceptual thinking, dies away, and the transcendence is presented in its undivided oneness.

The supra-intellectual perception of truth gives us the consciousness of the undivided sameness of being at every point of existence, and hence presents the essence of truth which cannot be apprehended if the mind allows itself to be worked by the concepts it has developed in the course of evolution. The truth out of all reference to the order of expression is, therefore, truth in the metaphysical sense. It is the highest truth in spiritual sense also, in so far as its value is greatest because of its being the essence of being, and because of its being ever present and most intimate. The highest truth in spiritual sense is never distant, is never far; it is ever present, ever inmost. The least difference, the least mediacy makes truth foreign to us, and makes a *rapprochement* between the seeker and the sought impossible. And when, therefore, truth is sought in the ever-growing experience, mental or supra-mental, the face of truth can never shine before us, for it is not there in its pristine purity and undiminished radi-

ance. The sense of distance still troubles us, the sense of reception bespeaks the difference, but truth denies difference and can neither be sought nor received, for in the unbounded expanse of its being it exists in its transcendent purity for ever. It can never be received, nor be sought.

Truth then in its highest sense is that which is, which can neither be presented nor received. It is the presentation of the absolute fact, and in this presentation it goes beyond the sense of the fullness of life, the completeness of power and the highest security of our finite being. It is the overshadowing of the concrete life and consciousness. The stretches of the finer vision into the immensities of life and the occasional depths of feeling which so often pass for the highest religious beatitude should not be confounded with the intuition of the Absolute.

Hence the spiritual truth of the Absolute is to be distinguished from the spiritual truth of the dynamic divine. The one is true because of its being the highest fact, the maximum existence beyond limitation; the other is true because of its influence and power. But they are not to be distinguished as two forms of truth,—the highest fact in self-alienation appears as the highest unity

of existence pregnant with knowledge and power.

In view of the above distinction, it is natural to characterise the highest truth in two ways : truth in its transcendence, and truth in its self-expression. Truth in its transcendence is truth absolute free from the limitation of expression. Expression implies a concreteness and concentration. It is the spiritual life and expression in time, but it cannot present the aspect of spiritual life which transcends time and expression in time.

To distinguish the truth in transcendence as different from truth in self-expression, it is natural to indicate as *Neti, Neti*, not this, not this. The highest spiritual experience seeks to describe the greatest spiritual truth in negative terms, in the terms of denial of all that meets us in the sensuous and the super-sensuous realisation. *Neti Neti* indicates the impossibility of knowing the unknowable. Positive knowledge is in a sense a limitation, for it implies the duality of the percipient and the perceived, the experient and the experienced. *Neti Neti* denies this possibility of knowledge, it denies the possibility of indicating the truth by clear characterisation. All characterisation is thought-description, and truth evades the grasp of thought.

(To be concluded)

## ASHTAVAKRA SAMHITA

BY SWAMI NITYASWARUPANANDA

### CHAPTER XVI

#### SPECIAL INSTRUCTION

अष्टावक उवाच ।

आचक्षु भृशं वा तात नामाशास्तुष्यनेकशः ।

तथापि न तव स्वास्थयं सर्वविस्मरणादृते ॥ १ ॥

चटावकः Ashtavakra उवाच said :

तात Child नामाशास्त्राणि diverse scriptures चनेकशः many times आचक्षु speak श्रुत्वा hear वा or तथापि still सर्वविस्मरणात् through forgetting all कृते except तव your स्वास्थयं Self-abidance न not ( अस्ति is ),

1. My child, you may often speak<sup>1</sup> upon various scriptures or hear them. But you cannot be established<sup>2</sup> in the Self unless you forget<sup>3</sup> all.

[The key-note of the Advaita Vedanta is that the Self alone exists and that all else is false, unreal. The unreal, manifold universe is constantly engaging our mind and hence we cannot have the knowledge of our Self. To be fully established in one's Self, the condition must be reversed.

<sup>1</sup> *Speak etc.*—The *Sruti* has repeatedly said that “the Self is not to be realised by the power of speech, by a vast intellect or by the study of the Vedas.” It is a question of actual experience and not of mere intellectual knowledge.

<sup>2</sup> *Established etc.*—when the self will know the Self and nothing else. In our present condition, we are not in our own self. We are dwelling in the body and mind and the various things of the world. Wherever our self-consciousness is, there we are.

<sup>3</sup> *Forget etc.*—That is, one must be conscious of the Self alone and should not perceive anything else. This is a state which can be attained by destroying Ignorance which is the cause of the manifold universe. A deep sleep state or a similar condition induced artificially, in which all is forgotten, is not meant.]

भोगं कर्म समाधिं वा कुरु विद्वन् तथापि ते ।

चित्तं निरस्तसर्वाशमत्यर्थं रोचयिष्यति ॥ २ ॥

विद्वन् O sage भोगं enjoyment कर्म work समाधिं mental concentration वा or कुरु do तथापि yet ते ते your चित्तं mind निरस्तसर्वाशं with all desires extinguished अत्यर्थं That which is beyond objects रोचयिष्यति will like.

2. O Sage, you may enjoy,<sup>1</sup> or work, or practise mental concentration. But your mind will still yearn<sup>2</sup> for That<sup>3</sup> which is beyond all objects and in<sup>4</sup> which all desires are extinguished.

[<sup>1</sup> *Enjoy etc.*—All these occupations indicate that the Self has not yet been realised.

<sup>2</sup> *Yearn etc.*—The mind cannot have lasting satisfaction in enjoyment etc.

<sup>3</sup> *That etc.*—The Self is meant. It is above all quests of life and mind.

<sup>4</sup> *In etc.*—Therefore, it cannot be realised until all desires have been destroyed. The state of Self-knowledge does not permit the existence of any desire in the mind.]

आयासात् सकलो दुःखी नैनं जानाति कश्चन ।

अनेनैवोपदेशेन धन्यः प्राप्नोति निर्वृतिम् ॥ ३ ॥

सकलः All आयासात् from effort दुःखी miserable कश्चन anyone एनं this न not जानाति knows अनेन this उपदेशेन by instruction एव verily धन्यः blessed one निर्वृतिं emancipation प्राप्नोति attains.

3. All are unhappy because<sup>1</sup> they exert themselves. But none knows this. The blessed one attains emancipation through<sup>2</sup> this very instruction.

[<sup>1</sup> *Because etc.*—All exertion presupposes desire—the desire to attain things not possessed at present. Desire, both satisfied and unsatisfied, is a cause of misery. Satisfied desire brings on at first satiety and afterwards more desires and so the chain is lengthened. The unhappiness of unsatisfied desire is obvious.

<sup>2</sup> *Through etc.*—This instruction is enough ; for if anyone carries it out in life, that is to say, becomes inactive (not outwardly only, but also inwardly by eradicating all desires which are the spring of action), one attains Self-knowledge.]

व्यापारे खिद्यते यस्तु निमेषोन्मेषयोरपि ।

तस्यालस्यधुरीणस्य सुखं नान्यस्य कस्यचित् ॥ ४ ॥

यः Who तु ( expletive ) निमेषोन्मेषयोः of closing and opening the eyelids व्यापारे in the activity अपि even खिद्यते feels pain तस्य of that आलस्यधुरीणस्य of the master idler सुखं happiness न not कस्यचित् of other कस्यचित् of anyone ( भवति is ).

4. Happiness belongs to that master idler<sup>1</sup> to whom even<sup>2</sup> the closing and opening of eyelids is an affliction, to none<sup>3</sup> else.

[<sup>1</sup> Master idler—The man of Self-realisation, who is completely inactive.

<sup>2</sup> Even etc.—These also presuppose some body-consciousness. The man of Self knowledge feels even that little body-consciousness as a limitation and painful.

<sup>3</sup> None etc.—One must be absolutely detached from body and mind to be truly happy.]

इदं कृतमिदं नेति द्वन्द्वैर्मुक्तं यदा मनः ।

धर्मार्थकाममोक्षेषु निरपेक्षं तदा भवेत् ॥ ५ ॥

यदा When मनः mind इदं this कृतं done इदं this न not ( कृतं done ) इति this द्वन्द्वैः by the pairs of opposites मुक्तं freed ( भवति is ) तदा then ( मनः mind ) धर्मार्थकाममोक्षेषु in work of religious merit, prosperity, desire of sensual enjoyment and spiritual emancipation निरपेक्षं indifferent भवेत् becomes.

5. When the mind is freed from such<sup>1</sup> pairs of opposites as 'this is done' and 'this is not done', it becomes indifferent<sup>2</sup> to religious merit, worldly prosperity, desire of sensual enjoyment and liberation.

[<sup>1</sup> Such etc.—The idea of duty is meant.

<sup>2</sup> Indifferent etc.—One who has gone beyond all idea of duty, does not care for the fourfold objects of life.

The sense of duty arises from desire. Without desire, no duty. The fourfold objects of life presuppose desire without which they are meaningless. Even liberation is not an object of desire with one who has attained true Knowledge.]

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

We hope to continue *Discourses on Jnana Yoga* by SWAMI VIVEKANANDA two months more. . . . SWAMI VIJAYANANDA who contributes *A Messenger of the Beloved* to the present issue, is a monk of the Ramakrishna Order. The little piece was written by him while he was staying at Mayavati and was struck by the strange cry of the bird to which he refers in course of his article. . . . Our article this month, *A Review and a Fore-cast*, may be looked upon as comple-

mentary to our article last March, *Through the Dark to the New Dawn*. . . We draw the readers' special attention to ROMAIN ROLLAND's article this month, *Early Hellenic-Christian Mysticism and Its Relation to Hindu Mysticism*. As they will see, the subject is an important and absorbingly interesting one. . . . SHIV CHANDRA DATTA, M.A., B.L., F.R. ECON. S. pursues the subject which he took up last April, in the present article, *Professor Benoy Kumar Sarkar on Modern Economic Life*. Mr. Datta dealt in his last two essays, pub-

lished in April and May *Prabuddha Bharata*, with the economic views of Mahatma Gandhi. He now takes up the views of Prof. Sarkar. Prof. Sarkar is a well-known scholar and author, who has travelled almost all over the world, and has both a theoretical and practical knowledge of the economic conditions of most countries. He is one of the few Indian scholars who have propounded any constructive view of what India's economic future should be. Mr. Datta is, therefore, justified in presenting Prof. Sarkar's views to our readers. Prof. Sarkar is just now in the Munich University, Germany, lecturing on Indian Economics. . . . Dr. MAHENDRA-NATH SIRCAR, M.A., Ph.D., contributes *The Upanisadic View of Truth* to the present number. Our readers will find him as erudite and profound as ever.

### COMMUNISM AS A RELIGION

We Hindus always believe that religion is a constitutional necessity of men. If we are deprived of our existing religions, new religions will grow to take their place. This fact has been strikingly demonstrated by Russian Communism. Our readers must be aware how Russia has been leading an anti-religious campaign for some time with disastrous results to the Christian Church in Russia. Tremendous protests have been made against this in Europe and America. Both the Roman and the Protestant Churches have raised their voice of indignation against the Bolshevik atrocities. But this does not appear to have produced much effect in Russia. The campaign against religion is an imperative necessity with Communism. "Religion is the opium of the people," said Karl Marx. Marx also said : "Destroy the social world of which religion is the spiritual aroma and you destroy religion. . . . Religion is the flower that covers the chains. Destroy the flowers and the chains will be seen." Communism is convinced of the truth of Marx's words. There are two ideas in them. One is that if the present politico-econo-

mical system is destroyed, religion will also decay. The other is that if religion is directly attacked, it will expose the "chains" hidden by religion and thereby the creation of the new system will be hastened. Russian Communism is earnestly carrying both lines of attack. This is the significance of the Russian struggle.

It cannot be denied that religion has oftentimes allied itself with the powers that be, especially in the West, and especially so in Russia where the Czar was the head of both the State and the Church. Religion has made another mistake. For good or for evil, it has often lent its colour to socio-economic and political institutions, customs, conventions and systems, which naturally cannot be either perfect or permanent. If these were not sanctified by religion, people could easily reform or reject them with the growth of knowledge and experience. But religion made them sacred. And now the evils of these really secular institutions have been transferred to the account of religion, and religion is considered guilty of them. The bitterness of the Bolshevik Russia against religion is mostly due to this. Religion has indeed, in the West, often stood against the progress of science and secular improvement. We in India have been more fortunate in this respect, though it is true that the connection of religion with the socio-economic institutions in India also has not been quite fortunate. In this respect, India may well take warning from the anti-religious propaganda of Communism. There is a section of Indians, orthodox they call themselves, who raise the cry "Religion in danger!" whenever any reform in the social body is proposed. Unless they learn wisdom betimes, religion will really be in danger. The tendency of India is to allow the greatest possible liberalism in religion. Had it existed in Russia, there is great doubt if to-day Communism had taken the attitude it has done against religion. The fundamental thesis of Communism is not wrong : it wants to ensure equal opportunities and rights for all in the

body politic. All must have equally the blessings of life. Though in details we may disagree with the Communists, we also sincerely want that all should have, as far as possible, equal rights and privileges in life. But this is only the outer aspect. Life does not consist in socio-economic, political or intellectual activities. There is another side, in which life finds satisfaction only in realising itself as Eternal Being. Attempts at this realisation have not any necessary quarrel with equality of all in the secular life. To us, therefore, real Communism is not the antithesis of spiritual life. The two can well exist together, and with excellent results.

Unfortunately Communism, as it is operating in Russia to-day, is too headstrong. But perhaps we should not pronounce any judgment as yet. It is an experiment, and rapidly changing. What form it will ultimately take, cannot be estimated now. There is a chance that a new religion may evolve out of Communism itself which is so hostile to religion now. Prof. John Dewey writes in a recent issue of *The Current History* : " . . . Communism has itself become a religion that can tolerate no rival. . . . When I refer to the religious character of Communism I mean that it commands in its adherents the depth and intensity of emotional fervor that is usually associated with religion at its height. Moreover, it claims intellectually to cover the whole scope of life. There is nothing in thought and life that is not affected by its claims; it has, one might say it is, a body of dogmas as fixed and unyielding as that of any church that ever existed. History records many instances of the persecution of one religious faith and its followers by those of another religion when it gained power. What is going on in Soviet Russia is something of the same kind. No one can understand it who thinks of it as a persecution of religion by a strictly political power. To get its real meaning one must align it in thought with the great struggles between rival religions that have marked  
ry."

This statement may appear surprising to many. But it is nevertheless fundamentally true. Whenever any thought or movement claims our all, absorbs our whole being, it necessarily becomes religious in character, however strange in form. And Communism is doing this. It is true that there are many Communists to whom it is not yet so deep and apparent. But if Communism succeeds in growing strong and deep, it must necessarily evolve an outlook on life and a code of behaviour, which ultimately must have a mystic aspect as any religion. But before that happens, Communism will, of course, have much changed.

A Russian writer has contributed a thoughtful article to the latest number of *The Hibbert Journal*, under the title, *Russian Communism as a New Religion*. In this he has very cleverly pointed out the similarities between established religions and Communism. "In what does the religious nature of Communism consist? First of all in its fundamental prerequisites. The religious method is primarily belief—belief in something unconditional, absolutely correct and true, belief in revealed truth. All religions are marked by this feeling . . . The religious man has no right to doubt." Communists also implicitly believe in their ideal. We may ask : How can we have a religion without a God? But there are actually such creeds, eg., Confucianism. Communism "originated as a typical moral teaching, as a derivative of the ancient Christian philanthropic idea. Its primary theme . . . has an astonishing resemblance to the old leitmotiv of Christianity—the religion of the oppressed, of the proletariat." "Communism came into the world as the moral doctrine of the oppressed." But there is a difference between it and Christianity. "The moral centre of Christianity lies in a humble attitude to the hostile natural process. The kingdom of this world is declared to be the kingdom of evil, and by way of compensation the idea of a heavenly kingdom is introduced, the kingdom of the



oppressed who are defrauded in this life. Christianity is therefore the typical religion of the downtrodden class, which expects consolation but has not the strength to rebel. Communism, born under other conditions, is also the religion of the persecuted, but in this case they rise against their enslavers and will not submit. It is the religion of revolt and its morals are the morals of revolt. Therein consists its resemblance to Islam, its unlikeness to the religions of non-resistance—Christianity and Buddhism. The Mohammedan idea of a holy war is repeated in the idea of a civil war against the oppressing class, which is the moral basis of the religion of the Commune." "Christianity held out to sinners and persecutors the terrors of the Last Judgment; Islam menaced the infidel with a holy war; Communism proclaims a world-revolution, a sort of Last Judgment of the proletariat on the bourgeoisie of the world."

Every creed has its holy books, its saints and its characteristic science, art and culture. Communism also does not lack them. "The 'Holy Scriptures' in the form of writings of Marx and Lenin, the epistles of these or the other 'holy fathers' and 'apostles,' the works and opinions of prominent Communists, become the sources of opinion, exactly reproducing the scholastic period of the religious thought of Christianity, when authority also reigned. Marx was the Aristotle of the movement, and the rôles of the saints are played by Communists of distinguished merit." "The idea of a Communistic science is created—a proletarian science, a proletarian art."

Then there is the ritual. "Already it is created—this ceremonial or ritual. Already processions of Communists march through Moscow; already heretics are cursed in some places and extolled in others. . . Already emblems and badges have appeared, and the ikons of the fathers of the Communist Church adorn the clubs—those temples of the new religion. Already there are preachers and apostles (agitators), who are sent abroad into all lands to preach the new Gospel

and seek new adepts. . . Already the deification of the actors of the early period has begun. . . . Lenin is now a legend. . . Deification gives rise to the idea of eternity. . . When the founder dies, his death provides a reason for the creation of a Pantheon, or the establishment of an Olympus for the new deities. A tomb or sacrophagus appears, and 'imperishable relics.' The act of worship begins, preceded, imperceptibly to the faithful themselves, by a new belief that their deceased leader or prophet still lives in some other sphere. All this, too, actually exists : we have the mausoleum of Lenin—that Moscow parody of the Egyptian pyramid, that stone of the Kaaba in the Communist Mecca—and in it rest the relics of the founder of the Religion, the first prophet, and, perhaps, deity." "The Communist religion already has its new generation, thinking in terms of Communism, with a logical organisation of thought quite incomprehensible to us, with an unfamiliar view of the reductions of logic; but again, to the historian it is a well-known picture—the early Middle Ages, with its system of compulsory conversion, threats, and repressions by the ruling church; with its careful attention to the education of the young in the spirit of religion."

From what we have quoted above from the Russian writer, it will be clear that Communism has undoubtedly a religious colouring. The similarities discovered may not all be essential, may be mere chance coincidence. But there is no doubt that the attitude of mind of the votaries of Communism is certainly religious. Knowing the atrocities committed in the name of Communism, we may feel shocked to consider its mental outlook as religious. But has there not been also much persecution and bloodshed in the name of recognised religions? The similarities between religions and Communism, however, do not entitle us to call the present-day Communism as actually religious. That would be preposterous. There are various reasons why it cannot be called a religion yet. But the *mental outlook and attitude* has

certainly religious potentialities. There is undoubtedly an attempt in Communism to view life and being from a new angle of vision. This impulse may lead its votaries to a deeper philosophy by and by. Whether it does so or not, what we have to note is that this impulse is not destined to be frittered away without producing deep effect on the mind and life of humanity. Swami Vivekananda repeatedly said that the future lies with the Sudra, the working class everywhere in the world. The Russian Communism is a remarkable portent of its awakening. It is undoubtedly going to remould human society on a different basis. No sane man will deny that there is much that should be done in alleviating the conditions of the masses in every country. The question is what method should be adopted to inaugurate the new era in every country. In India we have always proceeded through evolution and not revolution. Should we not try to give the Sudras their own as promptly and as naturally as possible? That will save India from all the disasters of a revolution.

Whenever there is a strife between classes for material possessions, the spiri-

tual considerations go to the wall. Communism is a menace to all civilized communities, because in its present form and mood, it tends to disrupt the finer things of life, cultural and spiritual. The remedy does not lie in denying the claims of Communism *in toto*, but in admitting its legitimate appeal and harmonising it with our cultural and spiritual heritage. The latter must be purged of their class favoritism, and all the privileges, secular and spiritual, should be given to the masses as soon as possible. Swami Vivekananda was quite alive to this need. Hence his doctrine of the worship of the *Daridra-Nârâyana*. That way only can religion and the modern politico-economical and social tendencies be reconciled. To look upon every one, and especially the poor, as veritable God and thus give them all the rights and opportunities in the spirit of love and worshipful service, is to truly create the religion of Communism. The salvation of Russia lies in following its present outlook to its uttermost limit in the domain of reason and experience. Thus it will not only save its secular Communism, but will invest it with a real spiritual value, and thus make it a blessing to mankind.

## REVIEW

**SWAMI VIVEKANANDA: A STUDY.**  
By D. V. Athalye. Swadeshi Publishing Company, Poona City. 280 pp. Price Rs. 4/-.

The book is an appreciative, though critical, estimate of Swami Vivekananda's career and genius. The account is based, as acknowledged by the author, on the writings and the speeches of the Swami and his lives published by the Ramakrishna Order. The life-story has been so narrated as to exhibit the growth of the Swami's personality. The Swami was great, in the author's view, not only as a world-preacher but also as a nation-builder. "The regeneration of India and through her the regeneration of the world,—this was the dream of the Swami and this was what he was sent on earth for."

The author has given a succinct review of the Swami's lectures on the four Yogas,

which are, in his opinion, a compendium of Hinduism at its best. They embody the principles of universal religion. They restate Hinduism so as to suit the modern mind. They show that the sublime truths of the Vedanta are in conformity with the highest ethical ideas as well as scientific and metaphysical conceptions.

The author's account of the Swami as a patriot-saint and national worker is also interesting and illuminative. The Swami changed the whole outlook of national life. He not only gave plans and projects for its reconstruction, but adopted practical measures to carry them out. His understanding of India was far deeper than that of any other nationalist of the age. He was equally conscious of her glories and shortcomings and pointed them out with the insight of a prophet. In the concluding

chapter a brief outline of the reform movement of modern India has been given to estimate the Swami's greatness as a social reformer.

The author has taken exception to a few remarks of the Swami which are of minor importance and have no direct bearing on his teachings. So far as we have seen, the author's difficulties arise from one-sided view of the Swami's position and want of proper knowledge of the subject in hand. Space forbids us to launch into discussion here. The only question that deserves attention is the author's contradiction of the Swami's statement that "the Hindu mind was ever deductive and never synthetic or inductive." But we hold, in spite of the author's arguments to the contrary, that the Swami was fundamentally correct.

The book is, however, an admirable attempt to present to the general reader a short but comprehensive view of the Swami's life and teachings. It is to be regretted that the printing is not good enough and there are many typographical mistakes in the book. The price also appears to be too high.

**THE STORY OF BARDOLI.** *By Mahadev Desai. To be had of the Navajivan Press, Ahmedabad. ix+363 pp. Price Rs. 2-8 as.*

Swami Vivekananda would compare the Indian masses to a sleeping Leviathan and it was his belief that they were destined to do wonders, if only they could be awakened. His prophetic vision was fulfilled in the successful fight that the meek and mild peasants of Bardoli in Bombay offered to the great British Government which left no stone unturned to put them down. The peasants of Bardoli were subjected to ever-increasing taxation till the last enhancement of 80 p.c. rent in the year 1928 proved to be the last straw. When all legitimate steps to redress their grievances failed, they took to Satyagraha. The peasants refused to pay the enhanced rent and got ready to mutely suffer all consequences for that. At first there were doubt and diffidence whether such a step on the part of the peasants was not too bold and the Government also thought that the movement would soon fizzle out. But it gradually gathered strength: the timid became bold, the vacillating became determined, the weak became hopeful of success in their righteous cause. After about six months the Government agreed to redress their grievances.

The condition of the Bardoli peasants was

no better than that of their brethren in any other part of India. They were timid and fearful, divided by castes and many conflicting interests,—there were also to be found some black sheep amongst them. But what is the reason that they could show such a bold and united front? It is that when appeal is made to the religious and moral sentiment of the Indians, they at once start up. The Bardoli peasants were convinced that theirs was a righteous cause and as such God was with them. And they remained perfectly non-violent, for the simple peasants could easily understand that evil cannot be conquered by evil, hatred cannot be cured by the return of hatred and they resisted the indignation of the powers that be with humble meekness.

The success of the movement was no less due to the capable leadership of the 'Peasants' Sardar' as S. J. Vallabhbhai Patel was lovingly called. Now, what was the secret that lay behind the power of Mr. Patel? It was nothing but his burning love for the peasants and an overmastering passion to help them out of their woes.

India has got many lessons to learn from the Satyagraha of Bardoli, and those who want to lead the country can ill afford not to study it closely. The thrilling story of the Satyagraha and as also other incidental details are given in the present volume in a fascinating style.

**THE RELIGION OF BURMA.** *By Bhikkhu Ananda Metteyya. The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. ix 438 pp. Price Cloth Rs. 3-4, Board Rs. 2-12 as.*

It is Rhys Davids and the author of *The Light of Asia* that have made Buddhism popular in the West. Among other Westerners who have devoted their whole attention to the spread of Buddhism in the West, the name of the present author stands prominent. Born of English parents, Mr. Allan Bennett, afterwards known as Ananda Maitriya, was attracted to Buddhism early in life and embraced the faith at about his eighteenth year. Afterwards he came to the East, diligently studied Pali, became a scholar in Buddhist scriptures, and renouncing the world entered the Order as a Bhikkhu in Burma, where he passed some valuable years of his life. As such Ananda Maitriya is a very fit person to write about Buddhism as also the Religion of Burma.

According to him, the Buddhism as pre-

vailing in Burma, Ceylon and Siam, should not be classified as belonging to the Hinayan or the Southern School of Buddhism, as "the terms 'Northern' and 'Southern' as applied to the different types of Buddhism are misleading. . . ." In his opinion "The native, and correct designation of the pure form of Buddhism now prevalent in Burma, Ceylon and Siam is *Theravada*, 'The Tradition of the Elders' or as we might justly render it, the Traditional, Original, or Orthodox School." In the present volume the author gives not only the religious condition of

Burma but also the main principles of Buddhism as understood by him. A genuine lover of Buddhism, Ananda Maitriya brings in the vision of an idealist in observing things and manners, and finds more beauty in whatever he sees than will meet a passing observer. But as he also made a determined attempt to live the life, here and there in his writings there is a practical touch, which is compelling and will give the book a value all its own. The involved style of the author is unfortunately a little setback in sustaining the reader's interest in the book.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### SWAMI VISHWANANDA IN KARACHI

A correspondent writes from Karachi:

Swami Vishwanandaji, President of the Ramakrishna Mission, Bombay Branch, paid a visit to this city during last May. The Swamiji came at the invitation of an ardent admirer of the Mission. This is perhaps the first time after a lapse of nearly a quarter of a century that a highly cultured monk of the Ramakrishna Mission blessed this part of India with his visit, and as was to be expected, people of all castes and communities of this cosmopolitan city took advantage of his presence to listen to the eternal and inspiring message of Hinduism from one of its enlightened exponents.

Swamiji delivered a series of 9 lectures on the various phases of Hinduism and concluded his programme by a discourse on "Universal Religion," holding forth the eternal and universal character of the Sanatana Dharma. This theme may be regarded as a silken thread linking up the whole series and formed a fitting end to the lecturing tour.

The audience at these lectures was really encouraging, looking to the fact that new ground had to be broken by the Mission in Karachi. Now that a contact has been established, it is hoped that Swami Vishwanandaji and other monks of the Ramakrishna Order will visit this city more often and cater for the spiritual welfare of the Hindus here.

### R. K. ASHRAMA, PATNA

The report of Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Bankipur, Patna, for the period from January 1926, to March 1929, is a record of many useful activities. The following are

some of them: (1) 750 Scriptural classes were held in four different parts of the City. (2) Musical classes were held in the Ashrama. (3) Private interviews were given by the Swamis to outsiders. (4) The Ashrama conducted a magazine, "The Morning Star," in English and also a Bookstall. (5) Lecture tours were undertaken by the Sannyasins. (6) The Vivekananda Boys' Association was formed to educate students. (7) The Turiyananda Library issued 1,000 books during this period. (8) 20 students were taught in the Vivekananda Night School, and (9) The Ramakrishna Students' Home, a college students' hostel run on the lines of a Brahmacharya Ashrama, did much service to its inmates.

For the consolidation and immediate expansion of its works the Ashrama requires a permanent residence of its own on a suitable site, at least two bighas in area, which may accommodate a monastery, a lecture hall, a house for students, a charitable dispensary, a library and a playground and a gymnasium for boys. The land and buildings will cost, it is estimated, at least Rs. 40,000/- and the upkeep of the Ashrama another equal sum. We earnestly appeal to the generous public and to all lovers of humanity to place this highly useful institution on a permanent basis by donating liberally. All help may be sent to Swami Avyaktananda, Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Bankipur, Patna.

### R. K. MISSION SEVA SAMITI, HABIGANJ, ASSAM

The annual report for the years 1928 and 1929 of the R. K. Mission Seva Samiti at Habiganj, Sylhet, was duly to hand. The Samiti was established some nine years back and has been doing good work. In addition

to holding regular daily religious classes at the Ashrama where two monastic members live, keeping a library and reading room open for the public, and celebrating birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, the Samiti conducts four Night Schools in some Depressed Class villages of the sub-division, where more than a hundred boys and girls are given literary education. In addition, it has opened two charitable dispensaries in two villages and has one in its Ashrama. It conducts a Shoe Factory in a cobblers' village for the benefit of its inhabitants, and has established a Co-operative Society there in order to free them from the clutches of money-lenders. Last year the Samiti did excellent service during the Assam floods. The Samiti is also of great service to the town and the outlying villages,—it helps variously the needy and the poor by gifts in kind or cash, by nursing the sick and cremating the dead. And it is exerting a healthy influence on the civic life of the town, not to speak of its spiritual benefit.

The Samiti has no house of its own and no permanent funds, for both of which it appeals to the generous public. Work can be greatly expanded if funds are provided. All help may be sent to *Secretary, R. K. Mission Seva Samiti, Habiganj, Sylhet, Assam.*

#### VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY, JAMSHEDPUR

The report for the year 1928 is to hand. On account of the labour troubles during the year under review, the membership decreased from 510 in 1927 to 416 in 1928. The various activities of the Society, religious, educational, etc., were continued as usual. The birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and other prophets were duly celebrated. The Society conducted 4 free schools, teaching 120 students, and 13 boys resided in the Society's Students' Home, which is also an orphanage. The number of

resident workers in the Workers' Home was 11. Philanthropic works of various kinds were undertaken during the year under review. Nursing the sick, helping the poor and the needy and cremating the dead are the special features of the work of the Society. Total receipts, including previous year's balance, were Rs. 4,800-8-1 and the expenditure was Rs. 3,894-9-0. The present needs of the institution are a hall and a library. The Society appeals to the public for funds to enable it to take up this important work without delay. We hope the generous public will help the Society. All remittances may be sent to the Secretary.

#### CHARITABLE DISPENSARY, SHYAMALA TAL

The fifteenth annual report for the year 1929 of the above institution is to hand. The report shows the good progress made by the dispensary during the year. The dispensary is located in an out of the way place in the Himalayas. The service done by such a charitable dispensary to the hill people who go almost without medical treatment, deserves public support and encouragement. During the year under review the number of persons treated was 1,493, of which 13 were admitted in the Indoor Hospital. In order to cope with the increasing number of patients, the urgent necessity of a separate building was keenly felt. In response to the appeals made the previous year for building fund, the sum of Rs. 900/- was received. The authorities have begun the construction of a two-storied house on the plot of land bought for the purpose. The masonry work and the roofing have already consumed Rs. 1,723-7-9. The work is yet to be completed. A sum of Rs. 1,500/- is still required. Contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by *Swami Virajananda, Secretary, Shyamala Tal Charitable Dispensary, C/o The Vivekananda Ashrama, Shyamala Tal, Deori P.O., Via Champawat, Dt. Almora, U.P.*

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निश्चयेत ।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

## DISCOURSES ON JNANA YOGA

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Both happiness and misery are chains, the one golden, the other iron; but both are equally strong to bind us and hold us back from realizing our true nature. The Atman knows neither happiness nor misery. These are merely “states”, and states must ever change. The nature of the soul is bliss and peace unchanging. We have not to *get* it; we have it; let us wash away the dross from our eyes and see it. We must stand ever on the Self and look with perfect calmness upon all the panorama of the world. It is but baby’s play and ought never to disturb us. If the mind is pleased by praise, it will be pained by blame. All pleasures of the senses or even of the mind are evanescent, but within ourselves is the one true unrelated pleasure, dependent on nothing outside. “The pleasure of the Self is what the world calls religion.” The more our bliss is within, the more spiritual we are. Let us not depend upon the world for pleasure.

Some poor fishwives, overtaken by a violent storm, found refuge in the garden of a rich man. He received them

kindly, fed them and left them to rest in a summer-house, surrounded by exquisite flowers which filled all the air with their rich perfume. The women lay down in this sweet-smelling paradise, but could not sleep. They missed something out of their lives and could not be happy without it. At last one of the women arose and went to the place where they had left their fish baskets, brought them to the summer-house, and then once more happy in the familiar smell, they were all soon sound asleep.

Let not the world be our “fish basket” which we have to depend upon for enjoyment. This is Tâmasika, or being bound by the lowest of the three qualities (or Gunas). Next higher come the egotistical, who talk always about “I,” “I.” Sometimes they do good work and may become spiritual. These are Râjasika or active. Highest come the introspective natures (Sâttvika), those who live only in the Self. These three qualities are in every human being in varying proportions, and different ones predominate at different times.

We must strive to overcome Tamas with Rajas and then to submerge both in Sattva.

Creation is not a "making" of something, it is the struggle to regain equilibrium, as when atoms of cork are thrown to the bottom of a pail of water: they rush to the top singly and in clusters, and when all have reached the top and equilibrium has been regained, all motion or "life" ceases. So with creation; if equilibrium were reached, all change would cease and life, so-called, would end. Life must be accompanied with evil, for when the balance is regained, the world must end, as sameness and destruction are one. There is no possibility of ever having pleasure without pain, or good without evil, for living itself is just the lost equilibrium. What we want is freedom, not life, nor pleasure, nor good. Creation is eternal, without beginning, without end, the ever moving ripple in an infinite lake. There are yet unreached depths and others where stillness has been regained, but the ripple is ever progressing, the struggle to regain the balance is eternal. Life and death are but different names for the same fact, they are the two sides of one coin. Both are "Mâyâ," the inexplicable state of striving at one point to live and a moment later to die. Beyond all this is the true nature, the Atman. We enter into creation, and then, for us, it becomes living. Things are dead in themselves, only we give them life, and then, like fools, we turn round and are afraid of them, or enjoy them! The world is neither true nor untrue, it is the shadow of truth.

"Imagination is the gilded shadow of truth," says the poet. The internal universe, the *Real*, is infinitely greater than the external one, which is but the shadowy projection of the true one. When we see the "rope," we do not see the "serpent," and when the "serpent" is, the "rope" is not. Both cannot exist at the same time, so while we see the world we do not realize the Self, it is only an intellectual concept. In

the realization of Brahman, the personal "I" and all sense of the world is lost. The Light does not know the darkness, because it has no existence in the light, so Brahman is all. While we recognize a God, it is really only the Self that we have separated from ourselves and worship as outside of us, but all the time it is our own true self, the one and only God. The nature of the brute is to remain where he is, of man to seek good and avoid evil, of God to neither seek nor avoid, but just to be blissful eternally. Let us be Gods, let us make our hearts like an ocean, to go beyond all the trifles of the world and see it only as a picture. We can then enjoy it without being in any way affected by it. Why look for good in the world, what can we find there? The best it has to offer is only as if children playing in a mud puddle found a few glass beads. They lose them again and have to begin the search anew. Infinite strength is religion and God. We are only souls if we are free, there is immortality only if we are free, there is God only if He is free.

Until we give up the world manufactured by the ego, never can we enter the Kingdom of Heaven. None ever did, none ever will. To give up the world is to utterly forget the ego, to know it not at all, living in the body but not being ruled by it. This rascal ego must be obliterated. Power to help mankind is with the silent ones who only live and love and withdraw their own personality entirely. They never say "me" or "mine", they are only blessed in being the instruments to help others. They are wholly identified with God, asking nothing and not *consciously* doing anything. They are the true Jivan-muktas, the absolutely selfless, their little personality thoroughly blown away, ambition non-existent. They are all principle, with no personality. The more we sink the "little self", the more God comes. Let us get rid of the little "I" and let only the great "I" live in us. Our best work and our greatest influence is when we are without a

thought of self. It is the "desireless" to the real self, think only pure who bring great results to pass. Bless thoughts, and you will accomplish more men when they revile you. Think how than a regiment of mere preachers. Out much good they are doing by helping of purity and silence comes the word of to stamp out the false ego. Hold fast power.

## WHAT INDIA TAUGHT ME

By M. B. C.

Bees can live on "bee-bread" made of pollen mix'd with honey,  
But men and women need the ripened grain and fruit.  
For that they must wait till the pollen be scattered,  
And the petals have fallen,  
And the time of seeming nothingness is past;  
Only then is there food fit for the hungry.

Ye who ache to feed the hungry souls,  
Dwell in the sunlight of God's sure purpose.  
Unfold your petals, breathe out sweet fragrance;  
Admit the robber bees who steal your pollen, your stimulating thoughts,  
And bring you new strange thoughts instead;  
Then lose your life and be nothing, not even an airy blossom;  
Wait steadfastly, faithfully, in the love of God,  
Content to do nothing but protect and cherish the life within.

Let no enthusiast cajole you into "giving";  
What have you to give?  
You must receive, and receive, and receive  
The sunlight of God's love.  
Bad Farmer He, if yours is the only food He grows for hungry souls.  
Leave that to Him. He cares  
More than ever you can do. Why,  
It is His care working in you  
Makes you long, and yearn, and grow  
In His sunlight,  
Till all be fulfilled.

This is life's discipline,  
The "dark night of the soul."

"Selfishness," says the enthusiast,  
"Folly," says the practical man,  
"Stupid asceticism," say the gay;  
And you fear it may be so.

You may have lost your will to give,  
You may not know the way to live,  
You may not have the heart to live;  
And timidity and silence shut you in;  
You may be dead for all you know.  
Save, now and then,



Too seldom, far too seldom, and too faint,  
Is the yearning and the striving and the longing  
To be ready to give one's very self  
In perfect ripened food for hungry souls.

Yesterday the end seemed as far off as ever,  
Save, perhaps, for an oppressive weight that nearly dragged you from the tree.

You did not know you were so ready  
For the Farmer's hand beneath you  
To pluck the perfect fruit.

To-day you're free.

Free to give in glorious giving,  
Free to live, and free to serve.  
Who so gay, and who so living?  
Pour your soul out for the world.

## THE CONFLICT OF THE MORAL AND THE AMORAL

BY THE EDITOR

In the following pages we shall try to deal with a problem which always faces us in one form or another, especially in times of great changes. All of us may not be fully aware of its presence in our affairs, but it is nevertheless there. It is the conflict of the moral and the non-moral. The question is: Is morality completely pervasive of reality? If not, what should our allegiance be to the moral laws and to reality? On the one hand, it is staggering to think that we can live unmoral lives,—the very basis of life seems to sink down with the elimination of morality. On the other hand, reality taken as a whole, as we even now know it, can in no sense be called moral,—it is superbly apathetic to our moral standards; and if we want to fully relate ourselves to it, how can we hold on strictly to moral principles? This is the conflict. And some answer must be given to this question if our life and activity are to be soundly grounded and directed. As our readers will remember, we have dealt with the problem cursorily and incidentally in course of some of our previous essays, but certainly not fully or even adequately. Those have been merely passing references. Let us here try to envisage

the problem in its broader outlines and see if any solution emerges.

### I

Morals may be divided into two classes: self-regarding and other-regarding. Certain moral virtues have a predominantly subjective value, others have mainly an objective reference. Let us illustrate. Take truthfulness. It is a moral virtue which we consider as having a value in itself. Even where its non-observance may not do any harm to anyone, we seek to be truthful. Even if we were to live in a solitary island, we would try to be truthful. It has reference pre-eminently to our own self. Take, on the other hand, marriage. In every community there is a certain ceremony, through which a man and a woman must go before their living together can be considered moral. But this morality has pre-eminently a social reference. It is well-known that the marriage ceremony is not the same with every people, nor has it always been the same with the same people. Marriage customs have undergone many changes. In some community mere mutual understanding and a feast to the neighbours and kiths and kins have

been considered ceremony enough. Whatever the outer form, the sanctity of it is not less recognised. It is conceivable that all marriage ceremony may be discarded without taking away from the sanctity of the mutual understanding between a man and a woman. The mutual understanding is the essence of marriage and pertains only to the two persons concerned. The ceremony is the seal of the community on that understanding. It has reference to society alone. Here, then, morality is mainly other-regarding. We say 'mainly,' for the division that we have made of the moral virtues is not ultimate. Those which are self-regarding are also other-regarding to some extent and *vice versa*. Truthfulness, of which the necessity arises from an inner source, has a bearing on social well-being also. It is needless to amplify how without truthfulness, social life would be impossible or at least corrupted. Similarly, other-regarding virtues which are mainly concerned with the objective life, also influence our inner life to a remarkable degree. The division is, however, true because of their predominant tendency one way or the other.

What makes this difference in their emphasis? Many thinkers have sought to find out the ultimate source of moral sanction. Whatever that might be, until we have succeeded in tracing the origin of moral virtues to a source which is eternal, there cannot be any secure morality for mankind. Morality cannot be imposed on anyone. It must be a power from within. And it should be conceived as originating from within. In these days the mere public sanction or the sanction of law is not enough for our becoming moral. These we can easily defy. Or at least we know that these sanctions have little value, being born of the very imperfect judgments of mostly ignorant people. There is another sanction,—tradition. But what sanctity or value has tradition in our eyes nowadays? There is God, it is true. Some religions have sought to derive their moral codes from God Him-

self or His Messengers. But in these days of scientific enlightenment, these stories do not have much hold on us. Who knows what was the source of Moses' inspiration, whether it was Divine or purely subjective? Even if it be true that Moses heard the commands of God, how can that be true of *us* who did not or have not heard those commands ourselves? The very fact that we can break them shows that we may break them. The fact is, a mere knowledge of the moral code is not enough. There must be an inner compulsion also. And that cannot be unless the sanction comes from within. The modern mind, with every kind of authority crumbling around it, keenly feels it. It wants a code of self-regarding morals, which must originate from our very being. It is almost a truism that nothing can be truly called a proof, which is not inherent in the very nature of the thing to be proved. The proof must be immanent and not transcendental. For to find the proof of a phenomenon in another is to suggest an infinite regress,—it is only putting off the proof. So if we are to find a permanent basis for morality, we must search for it in our own self and not outside, not even in a God.

This necessity has been keenly felt by the modern mind. Hence the theory of conscience,—the still small voice within. Conscience is all right, and surely its promptings have a great value in the conduct of life. But conscience has unfortunately a strange way of changing itself and its dictates with the change of circumstances and growth of experience. It has no finality in its decisions. It is as blind as ourselves. The fact is, conscience is not really an authority, but merely a representative of the already achieved. It represents the sum total of wisdom at any time. But that sum total, alas, falls always far short of what is expected and wanted. How little we know! A moral code cannot be established with that little knowledge. Perfect knowledge must be its basis.

Truly speaking, therefore, we cannot have a complete moral code for ourselves until we have attained full Self-knowledge. Till we have become perfectly illumined, we shall always remain in doubt. But we need not despair. Failing to reach perfect knowledge, we can at least take help of philosophy. And in this, metaphysical conclusions are extremely valuable. What is our true nature? What are the characteristics of the eternal self? Since to know ourselves fully and truly is the one objective of life, evidently whatever is against those eternal characteristics must be wrong. Whatever hinders the manifestation of the true self is immoral and whatever helps it is moral. Whatever thought and action are in conformity with the nature of the Self are moral, and whatever are against it are immoral. But here again the question arises : How are we to know what are against the Self? —In order to know it, we must know the Self. True. But what we do not know ourselves at present, we may infer from the examples of others. There have been persons who have realised their true self. They have described its nature to us as far as possible. They have told us what help its manifestation and what hinder it. This way we may form an outline of the region as yet untraversed by us. It may be supposed that here also a sort of authority is proposed for our guidance. No, we must not call them our authority, but merely our examples, and there is a great difference between the two. In authority, we are not given the freedom of our own judgment : the sanction of morality does not lie in us, but in the things or persons considered as authorities,—we are merely required to do their bidding, as if morality has no other proof than the voice of the authority. The whole scheme is an ugly superimposition, autocratic and irrational. In the case of the examples, they do not consider themselves as authorities. The authorities, they declare, are in our own Self-realisation. They only say to us : “We have found, you may also find. Such

and such is the way.” Here there is no imposition from outside. Here is an appeal to our own reason and initiative. Here is a pointing out that we are our own sanctions, only we must know ourselves fully and completely, and the ways to do so are also open to us. This, then, is a rational and altogether honourable appeal.

The self-regarding virtues have their direct basis in our own eternal self. No time, no circumstances can change them. So long as our real self abides, and it abides eternally, these moral virtues also would last. Thus truthfulness, selflessness, kindness, chastity, fearlessness, love,—these are all eternally true. We shall not indicate here the character of our real self. But we may say that all these virtues really reflect it. Their opposites would cloud its vision. It will be noted that somehow all the civilised world consider them as the primary moral virtues, though in the present age of doubt and scepticism, the validity of some is being called in question. The mind of men has somehow reflected the unrealised glory of the true self. It has somehow a prevision of Eternity, and through its reflected light is groping its way to the goal. There is nothing surprising in this. For whether we know it or not, our true self is always asserting itself. Through our insanity, our sane self is trying to assert itself every moment and eventually prevailing. Through all the darkness of ignorance, the light of knowledge is always breaking. When we think that we are moulding events according to our mad desires, events are really being manipulated by the fingers of God. This is the great fun and mystery. All our short-comings are as it were being rounded off by the all-pervasive perfection of God. That is why when we study past events from a distance, they unmistakably show the movements of eternal verities behind and among their multifarious details, though none of those who were directly implicated in the events ever felt their presence. This

is the mystery of creation and also our hope and warning. In every little thing the ways of God justify themselves. None can escape those ways which we call moral and spiritual laws. We thus see that those which we have called pre-eminently self-regarding morals, are also somewhat true of the objective life and world. One reason is perhaps that human events are in one sense the aggregate of individual doings. And since in every individual the moral qualities directly and indirectly assert their power, they must do so also in the aggregate of the actions of individuals.

But we must remember that collective happenings in the human communities are not all in conformity with the moral ideals. Things do not happen all morally. Though we can envisage the outline of moral action in and through the doings and movements of mankind, we can also spy other factors and elements in them, which spread beyond the bounds of morality. In fact we must clearly bear in mind that man's inner urge is to become one with the universal reality of which the moral is but a part. He wants to relate himself with all that is, without exception. This urge is in the very core of his being. Naturally his impulses, aspirations, motives and actions cannot be all moral; and in fact they are not. The moral are only a part, and perhaps a very small part, of his being. Let us look at the universe. Very few of its things have a reference to morality so-called. Are the stars moral? The sky? The flowers? The joys and sorrows, the beauties and uglinesses of the universe? Its life and death, its changes and unchanging elements? Its origin and destiny? Do they not, in their deeper significance, if not in their apparent, transcend the bounds of our moral life and point to a vaster, mystical life? For these our inmost heart yearns. With them our being wants to feel its kinship and unity. And hence the other-regarding morals and amoral forces.

## II

What is it that signifies other-regarding moral qualities? Whatever it may be that originally creates communal life, it may be said that in the primitive stages of human society, the ideal elements have always to succumb to the claims of realities. We notice many fine moral virtues existing among savages,—truthfulness, chastity, etc. But this also we note that as soon as the savages meet with adverse communal circumstances, they easily lose those virtues and are corrupted. This clearly shows that in the primitive societies moral virtues have not triumphed over realities. In fact, primitive men grow up mostly in correspondence with their environments. There is a core of idealism in their communal life undoubtedly, but very vague, amorphous, undetermined. But around this indefinite core, all movements are in conformity with the environments. There is a spirit of subservience to realities and little attempt at moulding them after an ideal or conquering them with an ulterior purpose. Slowly, however, idealism grows, till at last some persons transcend the limits of the body and the lower mind and come in contact with a higher being, above and beyond the powers of realities. When this inner world becomes more and more known, man becomes consciously denizens of two worlds, outer and inner, and find that his satisfaction, and in fact his true kinship, is essentially in the inner world and not outer. And he tries to shift the centre of gravity of his life to the inner region. Thus grows true idealism. Since that time, his main effort is to so mould the realities as to harmonise them with the ideals. He cannot live any more merely in conformity with the realities. He must conquer them and employ them in the service of the ideals. And the ideals, we know, must be pre-eminently moral and spiritual.

But here the problem of man's communal life arises. We have seen that

our heart hankers to embrace the entire universe of realities, and these realities are not always amenable to moral idealism. They cannot always cast themselves in moral patterns. Man also is not merely moral. His satisfaction lies not only in being moral, but also real. In fact, we must conceive two streams of life, one ideal or moral and another real. Man's satisfaction lies in being both ideal and real, but more in being real, for therein is the active touch of the living reality, without which life withers away and ideals become dry and dead. Man, therefore, often accepts the real unhesitatingly and wherever possible idealises it. Out of this, other-regarding moral virtues, such as marriage customs, domestic and social relationships, etc., grow. These are not intrinsically moral as we can easily infer, nor can we also call them always immoral. They are more often than not amoral.

Now these amoral elements change with the change of circumstances, as we pointed out in the case of marriage customs. This necessary distinction between self-regarding and other-regarding morals is not, however, properly recognised by people. We must remember that the masses who do not act always after conscious thinking, have to believe the other-regarding virtues to be as much binding as the self-regarding ones, otherwise their observance and practice of them will be half-hearted and incomplete. The evolution of the other-regarding virtues has to be noted in this connection. After every stage of evolution, there comes a stage of stability and unquestioning practice. At every stage we believe in certain other-regarding virtues as intrinsically true and therefore permanent in character and we practise them with all the devotion of our heart. But after the stage of stability comes the stage of change. Circumstances have in the mean time slowly altered. New realities have forced themselves on our mind and attracted it. A new world has opened. Therefore some readjustment in our

outlook, customs and practices has become urgent. Then the other-regarding virtues have to change. And it is then that a great opposition comes from the masses who have been following those virtues as being for all time. They strenuously oppose the change and firmly hold on to the old forms. They believe that these are the very essence of all morality and if they are changed all morality will vanish. They are right to a certain extent. For it sometimes happens that the urge of realities is such that they have to be accepted if we are to live and yet they cannot be immediately idealised into moral forms. We may just point to our present circumstances. The industrial, political and cultural revolutions that are occurring everywhere have created a new world for us. They have given rude, if not fatal, shocks to our previous outlook and many of our moral and religious beliefs. It is easy to say that we must yet hold on to ideals. But it is not easy to point out how we can escape the urge of realities and how we can live by ignoring realities. We for ourselves have always considered such idealistic prescriptions as futile. They may help an isolated few, but not the people in general. The world is faced with grim realities, urgent, menacing. They cannot be overlooked. We must face them and reckon with them. And in trying to do so, we find that old moral standards are slipping through our fingers one by one. And the cry has gone forth that morality is gone, morality is of no avail at the present hour. What has happened is not that morality has gone. It cannot go. Because it is our very nature. So long as we live, it also must live. But the other-regarding morals are in the melting-pot. New forms have to emerge. We are just now in the stage of change, of evolution. Undreamt-of facets of reality are facing us. We must study, estimate and accommodate them. It will take time. Many of us will cry out in panic. Others will search for new vistas of vision and eventually—if

humanity is not to perish—new groupings would be made, new forms of other-regarding virtues will emerge. We do not for a moment forget the excesses in which large sections of mankind—mostly foolish, ignorant and thoughtless—are indulging in the name of new life. They think that morality has been vanquished, that it was a creation of interested parties in the past ages, that it cramped life and they are now to enjoy true freedom. It is a foolish dream of foolish minds.

The problem of the moral *vs.* non-moral is not to be solved, therefore, by scrapping the moral. Individual morality, the self-regarding virtues, will always remain. But social morality, the other-regarding virtues, will change and new forms must take their place.

### III

What forms will social morality take? How to determine it? The one mistake that many so-called reformers make in presaging the new forms is to formulate them from the merely moral point of view. The exclusively moral man is a man of narrow vision. He reaches towards the highest point, it is true. But he merely cuts his way through reality. He traverses the infinite reality only along a line, the vast contents remain outside his view. He is, therefore, ill qualified to envisage the future for all. He emphasises the backbone. But the full form is beyond his ken and jurisdiction. One must be also an artist in order to be representative of all men and all reality. He must combine in him the unchanging moral outlook as well as an all-encompassing spiritual vision. He alone can be the leader and the guide of the new age. The artistic quality which can feel and envisage the undefined beyond the definite details and reach towards future happenings, is something above and beyond the moral vision. And that is also why the spiritual vision is superior to the moral vision. There is nothing mysterious in this. The explanation is simple. Reality

comprises not only what is moral but also what is immoral and unmoral. In fact reality is amoral. Behind the phenomenal world, upholding and moving it, is the Self. The Self, therefore, is amoral. If that is so, its realisation also must be amoral. That is to say, the manifestations of the Self, and the feelings and actions following from it need not necessarily be moral in form. This is no self-contradiction. We have stated before that moral excellences are manifestations of Self-realisation. But they are only one aspect of Self-realisation. They do not constitute the whole of it. There is another aspect which is amoral, which is understandable only intuitively—through artistic perception. Thus we often find the expression of two apparently contradictory principles in the men of realisation. In one they are most moral, the acme of what a normal man must be. In another, they are abnormal, not to be estimated by the ordinary human standards. Only intuitively we can catch the fullness of life and experience that is theirs. In the ordinary affairs of the human world, also, these two principles are constantly active. The two movements of the soul, moral and amoral, are true also of the common men, only they do not perceive it clearly. The so-called social moralities are often no morality at all. They are often conventional. It may be, they have an effect on mind, which is intrinsically moral. But they are not in themselves moral. Their real justification and ground is not moral considerations, but the apprehension of life and reality more fully and deeply, from a deeper standpoint of soul's life,—of that aspect which is amoral. Through this amoral aspect of our being we come in contact with the vaster reality, not through the moral perception but through intuitive sympathy. The new social forms that may emerge in future, will be lasting and beneficial only to the extent they represent a deeper and more comprehensive vision of the soul. The deeper and more inclusive they are,

the better is the chance of their permanence.

Mind that we do not mean a sentimental grounding, such as many wild visionaries imagine at present. The artistic perception that we speak of is a rare quality not to be met with in abundance and is not to be acquired by emotional indulgence. Artistic perception also has to be *acquired*. The dross has to be eliminated. The eyes have to acquire an unprejudiced vision. The mind and the heart have to grow pure. The cravings of the flesh have to be stilled. Only then the larger movements of the universal being would come within the range of our view. The artistic perception that we are speaking about is nothing short of the perfect spiritual vision. That vision penetrates into the future and feels every single pulse-beat of the Being. It easily perceives the inter-relations of movements and forces and knows their relative scopes, functions and values. It thus becomes easy for it to formulate the purpose of an evolving age and community and know what changes must be made in the existing conventions, forms and outlook. And since this formulation comes from a spiritual vision and is in conformity with it, it does not militate against the moral aspect of being, and can be easily idealised into a moral movement, *i.e.*, made into other-regarding moral virtues.

In the present age, therefore, all the changes that have taken place and are impending, have to be reflected above all in a heart as vast as the universe, as pure as the purest crystal, and with the widest and deepest sympathies and understanding. Such a reflection is enough to conceive the new aspirations and changes as parts of a system. To be conceived by a pure universal mind is to be systematised. Has such a mind arisen among us of the present age? We believe it has.

Henceforward, it is an easy process. What are unmoral or even immoral according to the existing standards, have to be clothed with the glory of

the new vision. They have to be perceived and conceived from the new angle of vision, and at once they will reveal unthought-of contents. New conventions will grow of themselves, new enthusiasms will be created. Little effort would be necessary to instal them on the pedestal of worship. In fact an unwonted atmosphere of sanctity will surround them, and then it will not be difficult to conceive their perpetuation and observance as other-regarding moral virtues. It is always thus that the conflict between the moral and the non-moral in the age of change is resolved.

#### IV

But we admit that not all non-moral aspirations of the age can be idealised into moral form. There may be some which will always remain unassimilated into morality. Hinduism has always recognised this possibility. For example, marriage customs in some lands may change and may assume forms under the pressure of realities, which may shock the present mentality. But we believe that orthodox minds will gradually adjust themselves to the new forms and invest them with a moral grandeur. But there may yet be forms which will not so easily lend themselves to idealization, say, war or other forms of violence. Let us take a different kind of example—an instance of mild violence. It is well-known that the very existence of certain nations depends on their exploitation of other races. They have not such resources in their own countries that if they cease to exploit other nations they can maintain themselves. Suppose the exploited peoples prevent this exploitation. That is quite legitimate. But one cannot still forget that their legitimate action is producing grievous results in the land of the exploiters, *i.e.*, starving them to death. This is certainly a kind of violence. But we somehow think that we are not any way to blame for this harm. And we thus justify ourselves: We say that our concern is with our own country; we must first save it at

any cost. If as a result another country suffers, that is not our concern. Here is plainly an unmoral action made moral by the urgent sanction of patriotic feeling. War for defence is also thus idealised, though killing is extremely brutal. In ancient times, it was enjoined upon the *Kshatriya* king that he should go a hunting regularly. The purpose was evidently to keep strong the fighting qualities of the king and his enterprising spirit. But no killing for any purpose can be justified on moral grounds. There were other heinous deeds which were made the duties of a king: He must sow the seeds of dissension among his enemies. Enemies might be any way outwitted. He might employ spies against his enemies; and might take recourse to all kinds of diplomatic cunning. All these were justified on the ground that they were necessary for the safety of the kingdom. And who can deny that it was so? So long as the world continues what it has been for thousands of years, all these means must be adopted, however heinous apparently.

But do they not demoralise their employers? Have they not a corrupting influence? Here comes in the doctrine of *Karma Yoga*. Hinduism recognises that all duties cannot be idealised into moral forms, and yet they have to be done. How to avoid their evil effects? By performing them with an unattached mind. Here a very important question arises. Can we avoid the evil effects of evil actions if only we perform them without attachment? Again, can we really do an evil deed with an unattached mind? How far can immoral action be reconciled with *Karma Yoga*? What is the relation of morality with *Karma Yoga*? We believe that even apparently evil actions can be done in the spirit of *Karma Yoga*. Having made this startling statement it behoves us to clearly state all the attendant conditions and reasons. We have already mentioned that there is an aspect of consciousness which is analogous to and in fact akin

to the Divine consciousness. This universe contains both good and evil, and behind them there is undoubtedly the Divine mind. The Divine mind is not corrupted by the existence of evil. Sri Ramakrishna very aptly illustrated this fact: the poison of a serpent kills others but does not kill the serpent itself. Similarly of God. The evil of the world affects the ordinary beings, but not God. Man also can become God. He also can reach a state in which he feels like God, is one with Him. In that state, he can also behave and act like God. It is only in that state that man can do evil actions without being corrupted by them. But is it easy to reach that Divine condition? God is absolutely unattached to the universe, therefore He is its master. Man also has to be absolutely unattached to the world. God's action does not arise from any egoistic motive, for God has no such ego. All Divine movements spring from the mysterious deeps of His being. Similarly man must get beyond the planes of the ego and one himself with the Divine being. Only thus his actions will become identified with the Divine actions, or rather, all his actions would be propelled by a Divine urge. That means that the necessity of doing evil even in the spirit of *Karma Yoga* must have a Divine purpose behind it, and whatever is Divine must be considered to be absolutely good, however evil it may appear to our eyes. At least his evil actions will be as mysterious in origin and influence as the presence of the principle of evil in God's creation. Such evil-doing, it must be admitted, is rare. Let us nevertheless admit its possibility.

What we have spoken here is of the culmination itself. This means that there may be also stages leading to this culmination. In fact we may recognise two stages leading to the culmination. As to the first stage, we have been familiar with it in the general teachings of the *Gītā* on *Karma Yoga*. There the Lord enjoins that a *Kshatriya* must do his duty unattachedly, however evil it



may seem. In this stage the question of corruption by evil-doing does not arise. For it is taken for granted that a man has the tendency of *himsā*, violence, in his mind. If he indulges in it, it does not in fact add to his *himsā*, for he is trying to do so in the spirit of *Karma Yoga*, unattachedly, with the purpose of getting rid of it. If he abstains from external action of *himsā*, mere mental reasoning will not cure him of it. For it is well known that almost all our *samskāras* have to be *worked out*. So in the first stage of evil-doing in *Karma Yoga*, there is net gain, no moral loss. In the second stage, a man is considered to have been purged of all evil faculties and *samskāras*. His mind has been purified. He has learnt to act and live in an unattached way. He also, however, can do apparently evil actions, *when he feels that by doing them he can do great good to large masses of mankind*. We may pertinently take the example of Guru Govind Singh. He was a man of realisation. He is said to have attained the vision of the Divine Mother. He practised hard austerities, went through strenuous spiritual exercises and gained the Divine vision before he plunged into the organisation of the *Khālsā* and lighted a new fire in the hearts of the Sikhs. His mind represented the second stage. He acted detachedly, fought and killed enemies in order that his people might be rescued from the oppression of their enemies. He did not seem to have attained the third stage, the culmination which we may find well exemplified in the life of Sri Krishna. Of the second stage it may be said that though the form of action is evil, the motive is pure and unselfish.

It may be said that such a round-about way of reaching the Divine condition may well be avoided if we resolve on moral actions only. True. In fact, all men should attempt to be as moral as possible, though by the way we should mention that moral action also must be done in the spirit of *Karma Yoga* if it is to yield

spiritual benefit, otherwise morality would become only a kind of worldly wisdom. But as we have pointed out before, man cannot live within the purely moral groove alone. His self wants to become co-pervasive with the whole of reality. Man's aspirations, the higher ones, are more than merely moral. And these must be satisfied, if he is to be fulfilled. Necessarily he has to do much that is not strictly moral. Much of this becomes idealised into moral forms, as we have shown before. The exceptional cases that still remain, have to be done in the spirit of *Karma Yoga*. There is no other way.

But we recognise a danger in this. We know that such justification of evil-doing by *Karma Yoga* may easily lapse into actual evil-doing. In fact in the name of sanctified custom, we often indulge in practices which steadily devitalise us and lead us more and more to misery. There is, therefore, one principle always active in the world of men, which always asserts the supremacy of the ethical ideal above all other ideals and strikes at amoral practices. We shall find, if we observe closely, that among the teachers of mankind there are some who make a pre-eminently ethical appeal, and there are others who make a pre-eminently spiritual appeal. The one class condemn all ideals and practices which have the least of the immoral and unmoral in them. They stand by morality alone. We need not name them. Anyone can easily discern them. The other class are for high spiritual visions, which subsume not only the moral ideals, but transcend them by the enunciation of a higher reality and as such subsume also what are not strictly ethical. They are undoubtedly the greater teachers. But the presence and activity of the former class are a necessary corrective to any laxity that may result from the pursuit of the amoral spiritual visions.

In our opinion the duty of the present generations is clear. We have

in the preceding pages tried to draw in outline the present-day problems of morality. From this certain points have clearly emerged. The constructive genius of the modern age, he who would bring order into the present chaos, will not be one who would insist on the traditional morality. He must be a man of vision. He must hold before us a vision of life and reality which will reject nothing, embrace everything and will be all-comprehensive. It must necessarily be super-ethical, spiritual. This vision will impel us to its realisation. And this impulse to realise will create new enthusiasms, new forms, new sanctions and new social morals. It will above all be a cry for the renunciation of the lower visions as stepping-stones to the higher visions. This way we shall not only have all that is valuable in our new dream well conserved, but feel uplifted to levels which are much above the littlenesses of normal life. In this way also, we believe, the conflict of the moral and non-moral can be resolved. For as we have pointed out, intrinsic morality, the self-regarding virtues, are really the corollaries of the spiritual self-realisation. And in every genuine spiritual idealism, there must be those ethical virtues. But the spiritual vision will at the same time avoid the limitations of moral idealism,

for it will, as we have already said, comprehend all life and reality and all noble aspirations, moral, aesthetic or spiritual. The need of the age is that supernal vision. We believe we have it in Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

In conclusion we must sound a note of warning against partial aesthetic visions. When art does not reach the heights of spiritual realities, it often lacks the strength which alone can sustain the human mind in its upward struggles. These partial visions have a tendency to create anarchy and license and they eventually debilitate and degrade us. Better far than these the crudities, rigours and narrownesses of traditional morality. The real conflict, we shall find if we closely watch, is between these partial artistic visions and morality. These visions do not meet all the needs of life and mind, and where they fail they often try to triumph by denying them. But that way does not lie the solution. We want moral strength and we want vision. In their commingling, or rather in realising the spiritual vision which comprehends both moral idealism and the aesthetic visions, lies the salvation of the present age. This comprehended, the details will spontaneously readjust themselves.

## THE DIARY OF A DISCIPLE

OCTOBER 18, 1919.

It was 4 p.m. Swami Turiyananda was talking to a group of *Sannyāsins* and *Brahmachārins* who had come to his room in the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service at Benares.

*Swami*: (*Turning to one of the monks*) "Do you believe all these? (*The monk remained silent.*) I once felt this atheistic mood."

*Monk*: "Yes, Maharaj, sometimes I too feel that there is no God."

*Swami*: "So my confession emboldens you to speak out! Perhaps you

thought at first that if you spoke out, you would be exposed? But that is not so. Such a sceptical mood comes upon many. This is a stage on the way to God. Once the reading of a book made me atheistic."

*A Brahmachārī*: "Was the author a European?"

*Swami*: "Yes. What a terrible agony I then passed through! Nothing could give me peace. This mood lasted only a day or two. The book was full of materialistic ideas. After a hard struggle I got over its influence."

"A. also had to pass through such a state. He was an out and out *Vedântist*, you know. It is said in the *Gîtâ* : 'He who takes the Self to be the slayer, he who takes It to be the slain, neither of these knows. It does not slay, nor is It slain.' A. took to angling ! One day the Master sent for him, and when he came, said to him : 'Can you kill a man?' 'Why not, Sir? I can easily,' replied A. 'Will not the sense of sin prick your conscience?' 'Why? Who kills whom?' 'All right. Go ahead. This is also a stage—just as we enter one room through another. But you must not stop here. If you do, you will be ruined. Beware you do not become a householder with such an attitude of mind.'

"It is very difficult to realise God. The slightest desire blocks the way. The Master often said : 'The thread does not pass through the eye of a needle, if the minutest fibre sticks to it.' Swamiji once said to him : 'Kindly pray to the Mother that they (Swamiji's brothers, sisters, etc.) may have a bare subsistence.' The Master sent him to the temple to beg of the Mother. But when Swamiji entered the temple, he could not beg anything but *Viveka* (discrimination) and *Vairâgya* (dispassion). How could he? He had no attachment within. When he said this to the Master, the Master remarked to us : 'Do you see what a great receptacle he is? He could not ask of the Mother anything but *Viveka* and *Vairâgya*.' "

As the talk went on, Budo Bâbâ (Swami Satchidananda) came and took his seat after saluting Swami Turiyananda. The conversation then turned on Swami Saradananda who had written from Calcutta that he had to indefinitely postpone his intended visit to Benares being occupied with the work of Cyclone Relief in East Bengal and having had to attend the opening ceremony of the Bhubaneswar Math at the request of Swami Brahmananda.

B. Baba : "You say, Maharaj, that I create work. Now you see that even men like Swami Saradananda are so

busy that they do not find time to come to Benares for rest. Such is the lot of those who take up work."

Swami : (Solemnly) "Their action is inaction."

OCTOBER 14, 1919.

It was 4 p.m. Swami Turiyananda was sitting in his room. Some *Sannyâsins* and *Brahmachârins* were present.

Swami : "See how my skin has shrivelled. This is the sign of old age. King Yayâti also had the same experience. One day all of a sudden his skin shrivelled, his hair turned grey and his body became decrepit."

Disciple : "Why was it so sudden, Maharaj?"

Swami : "Do you not know?"

The Swami narrated the story of Yayâti, and said after some time :

"To be successful in any work, you must look upon the work itself as your ideal. You may have a fancy for a work for a day or two and then give it up as soon as it loses charm. This is no good. Sasi Maharaj (Swami Ramakrishnananda) demonstrated in his life how to work. For sixteen years he followed the same course in the same place. Sometimes his sufferings became so intense that he abused Sri Ramakrishna and Swamiji in the strongest language. But still he did not give up the work entrusted to him."

A : "Swamiji was once asked which of the four, *Jnâna*, *Bhakti*, *Karma* and *Yoga*, was the greatest. 'Don't bother yourself about that,' replied Swamiji. 'Take up any of them you like and follow it as best as you can. If you wish to do roguery, do it to the full. Never care for the result.' "

Swami : "Work for work's sake. Your whole mind should be fixed upon the work. Let that be your ideal, the be-all and end-all of life. Never mind success or failure."

He then mentioned the characteristics of the *Sâttvika* agent and asked Brahmachâri S. to bring him his copy of the *Gîtâ*. He read out the following *Slokas* and explained them :

"An agent who is free from attachment, non-egoistic, endowed with fortitude and enthusiasm, and unaffected in success or failure, is called *Sāttvika*.

"He who is passionate, desiring for the fruits of action, greedy, malignant,

impure, easily elated or dejected, such an agent is called *Rājasika*.

"Unsteady, vulgar, arrogant, dishonest, malicious, indolent, desponding and procrastinating, such an agent is called *Tāmasika*."

## SWAMI BRAHMANANDA THE SPIRITUAL SON OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

BY SWAMI SATPRAKASHANANDA

(Continued from the last issue)

Meanwhile, Swami Vivekananda had been writing to his *Gurubhāis* from America to unite and give themselves up to the service of humanity, the visible representation of God on earth. The signal success that attended the Swami in his mission to spread the message of the Vedanta in the West made them more attentive to the call, as they perceived the Divine Will working behind the events and urging them from the quiet of ascetic life to the arena of public activity. Most of his *Gurubhāis* restrained their tendency for free and quiet life of individual *Sāddhanā* and returned to the Math one by one. Gradually a stir was created in the secluded life of the Monastery. A considerable enthusiasm exhibited itself for the propagation of the Eternal Religion of India in the light of the life and teaching of Sri Ramakrishna. Greater attention was paid to study, discourse and debate. Regular weekly sittings were held for the discussion of the religious and philosophical subjects and for the training of the monks as preachers. In 1896 Swami Saradananda and after him Swami Abhedananda were summoned away to help the Swami in his work in England and America. In the same year a famine relief work was started by Swami Akhandananda in the District of Murshidabad. Though the Maharaj did not directly participate in these movements, he guided and supervised the activities with untiring zeal. He

regularly attended the weekly sittings and looked after the physical and spiritual welfare of the inmates of the Math, especially the new-comers. The birthday ceremony of Sri Ramakrishna and the annual festivals of the Goddesses Durgā, Lakshmi, Kālī and Jagaddhātri, observed in the Math from its very inception, were now performed under his direct management. In all important matters his advice was sought by the members of the Math.

With the return of Swami Vivekananda from the West in February, 1897, a tidal wave passed over the life of the Monastery. Even those of his *Gurubhāis* who still adhered to the traditional ideal of realising the *Atman* through meditation and *Tapas* by keeping aloof from the world, were gradually converted to his ideas of the nationalisation of religious life by dedicating it to the service of the Lord residing in all souls. They were now prepared to go anywhere and to do everything at the behest of the Swami. Swami Brahmananda who had all along stood by the Swami, accepted his views with great satisfaction and enthusiasm. Swami Ramakrishnananda who had identified himself with the daily service and worship of the Master in the Monastery for the last twelve years, went to Madras at the command of the Swami to open a new centre there.

In the summer of 1897 Swami Vivekananda went to Darjeeling for a short change with Swami Brahma-

nanda and Swami Trigunatita and a party of friends and disciples. Mr. and Mrs. Sevier had preceded him there. They were all guests of Mr. M. N. Banerjee, Bar-at-law. The party returned to Calcutta at the end of April. On the first day of May a representative meeting of the monastic and lay disciples of Sri Ramakrishna was held at Balaram Babu's house at the call of the Swami for the purpose of founding an Association to be called the Ramakrishna Mission. Swami Vivekananda became the General President and Swami Brahmananda the President of the Calcutta Centre. With great zeal and interest Swami Brahmananda looked after the work of the Association. The famine-relief operations of Murshidabad, mentioned above, were conducted under his guidance and direction. He made every possible arrangement (such as, collecting funds, sending money, workers and necessary articles to the relief centre) to help Swami Akhandananda to carry on the work efficiently. Swami Vivekananda returned from his tour in Northern India in January, 1898. The Math was transferred from Alambazar to Nilambar Mukherjee's garden-house on the western bank of the Ganges in next February. Swami Saradananda had recently returned from America, Swami Shivananda had come back from Ceylon, where he had been deputed by the Swami to do Vedanta work about the middle of 1897, as also Swami Trigunatita from Dinajpur after finishing famine-relief work. The Swami was highly pleased with the work done by them. He also congratulated Swami Brahmananda on the successful work the Ramakrishna Mission had done under his guidance and Swami Turiyananda for having trained in his absence the young *Sannyāsins* and *Brahmachārins* who had gathered round the names of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

The permanent home of the Ramakrishna Order at Belur was secured early in 1898. In this matter Swami

Brahmananda was the Swami's chief helping hand. He kept accounts of money and managed all affairs connected with the acquisition of the site and the additions and alterations in the old premises that were necessary to make them habitable. In January, 1899, it was occupied as the permanent headquarters of the Order. In their attempt to make the Math-land tax-free, the authorities of the Math had to institute a lawsuit against the Howrah Municipality. At the bidding of the Swami, Swami Brahmananda conducted the case successfully with extraordinary perseverance and indefatigable energy. Day after day he had to run under sun and rains to the advocate's house, the attorney's office and the law-courts and wait there long hours with unflagging patience. These and many other tasks, however uncongenial to his nature and mode of life, he imposed upon himself at the call of the Swami. With implicit faith in the words of the leader he faced all difficulties undauntedly and bore all hardships and privations with perfect suavity. He brought to bear upon the work the same earnestness and zeal with which he carried on his religious practices. As an ideal *Karma Yogi* he maintained such an impersonal attitude in the work that the nature of the work did not affect him in the least.

Swami Vivekananda also had full trust in him. He praised his practical wisdom and relied on him in all important matters. He used to say : "Rakhal has the intellect of a king." Considering his firm character and the mental equipoise which he maintained under all conditions, Swami Vivekananda sometimes compared him to Bhishma of the Mahabharata. He often said to his *Gurubhāis* and others : "Know it for certain that what the Master has said about Rakhal, Yogin and others is true to the letter. They are his kith and kin. They will stand by me even if I live the reckless life of a profligate."

In June, 1899, Swami Vivekananda left on his second visit to the West in

company with Swami Turiyananda and Sister Nivedita especially urged by Swami Brahmananda who thought that the Swami's visit again to the West was necessary. The work he had started in India was carried on with unabated zeal under the able guidance of Swami Brahmananda. The Mission had already organised preaching work in various parts of India in the form of classes and lectures and the publication of books and magazines. In the latter part of 1899 a terrible famine broke out in India; besides there were other visitations, such as cholera, plague, flood and landslip in the coming year. From the middle of 1899 till the Swami's return from the West in December, 1900, the Mission had to conduct vigorous relief operations in different parts of India. The internal affairs of the Math were managed directly by Swami Brahmananda. He took special care to mould the lives of young *Sannyāsins* and *Brahmachārins* who gradually increased in number. Regular practice of meditation along with other duties was strictly enforced for the development of their spiritual nature, for that was how they could be most helpful to themselves as well as to others. He also made personal attempts to improve the new home of the Order in every possible way. Besides the erection of necessary structures, he took utmost care to plant the grounds with trees, flower-beds and vegetable gardens collected from different places.

In October, 1901, Swami Vivekananda intended to perform the *Durgā Pujā* in the Math with image according to strict *Shāstric* rites. The day before he made known his intention to his *Gurubhāis*, Swami Brahmananda dreamt that the Ten-armed Mother was coming across the Ganges from the direction of Dakshineswar. As soon as the Swami mentioned his desire to celebrate the *Pujā*, he disclosed his dream to him. This at once settled the question. The chief function in connection with the *Pujā* was the feed-

ing of the poor. Hundreds of devotees and poor men were sumptuously fed during the three days of the *Pujā*. The Swami was glad that the whole ceremony was performed with great success under the able management of Swami Brahmananda.

It has been indicated above that Swami Vivekananda looked upon Swami Brahmananda as the greatest of his *Gurubhāis* and treated him with special regard. Still he could not tolerate any default of duty on his part. It was the Swami's express desire in those days that each member of the Math should go to the worship-room every morning and practise meditation. One morning as he went to the shrine, he noticed that some of his *Gurubhāis* including Swami Brahmananda had been absent. The Swami wanted an explanation but none could give any satisfactory reason for being absent. He asked them as a penalty to go out for *Mādhukari-bhikshā* and forbade them at the same time to go to the house of any of their friends. The Swami himself went to Calcutta that morning unable to bear the sad plight in which he had placed his dear *Gurubhāis*. On his return to the Math next day he enquired how they had severally fared the day before. He was greatly rejoiced to know that Swami Brahmananda had obtained a sumptuous meal from a merchant's house in an adjacent village.

About two years before the passing away of Swami Vivekananda in July, 1902, the Belur Math property which originally stood in his name, was vested in a Board of Trustees. The President of the Board was the *Mohānt* (Abbot) of the Math. Swami Brahmananda was elected the first President. According to the constitution of the Mission, the Board of Trustees of the Math is to be the Governing Body of the Mission and the President of the Board the President of the Mission. Though the election of the President took place every two years according to

the Deed of Trust, Swami Brahmananda occupied the paramount position of the President of the Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission for more than two decades till he entered into *Mahāsamādhi* in March, 1922. Swami Saradananda became the Secretary of the Mission about the same time and held that office till his last day in August, 1927. In them the Institution found a wonderfully harmonious combination, unparalleled in the history of an organisation, of two most important administrative heads. Through their concerted efforts and extraordinary powers of management and organisation, the movement started by Swami Vivekananda gathered in strength and force with the passing of days. The phenomenal growth of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission during the last thirty years is too well-known to be recounted here. Wherever there has been a wide-spread calamity throughout the length and breadth of India, the monks of the Ramakrishna Order have gone forward to relieve the distress. Besides the innumerable relief-centres opened temporarily during all sorts of visitations, it has established permanent institutions, religious, educational and charitable, for the threefold service of man all over India as well as in distant America.

After the passing away of Swami Vivekananda Swami Brahmananda had to work very hard for a time to organise the public activities as well as the internal working of the Order. Swami Turiyananda had come away from America in eager expectation to meet the Swami, but no sooner did he reach Rangoon than he received the news of his demise. With a broken heart he came to the Math at Belur, but lost all interest in public work and left the Math very soon to resume the former life of solitary meditation and *Tapasyā*. Towards the end of 1902, Swami Trigunatita, who had been conducting the Bengali organ of the Order, *Udbodhan*, since its start in 1899, went to America to work in place of

Swami Turiyananda, leaving the paper in the hands of Swami Suddhananda, the present Secretary of the Mission. Swami Brahmananda helped the young editor in diverse ways for the efficient management and improvement of the paper. His suggestions and instructions were much valued by the new editor. He also urged his friends and *Gurubhāis* with literary aptitudes to contribute to the paper regularly and was able to secure some good articles. Though not accustomed to writing, he himself contributed to the paper once.

In 1903 Swami Brahmananda managed to have a respite for several months from his strenuous duties as the Head of the Order and devoted it exclusively to the practice of meditation and *Tapasyā* in sacred places. During this period he revisited Benares, Kankhal, Brindaban and Allahabad. He left Calcutta about July for Benares with Swami Subodhananda and other monks and stayed there at the Sri Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama for about a month. From there he went alone to Kankhal and stayed there for nearly two months. At Kankhal he practised much meditation keeping awake long hours at night, and some miraculous powers (*Bibhūtis*) attainable by the *Yogis*, particularly clair-audience, manifested themselves in him. After two months he went to Brindaban.

At Brindaban he lived again with Swami Turiyananda, who had already been there. It was perhaps for the fifth time that he was at Brindaban. The two *Gurubhāis* rejoiced to revisit the places associated with the Divine life of Sri Krishna on earth. The Maharaj lived a very austere life at Brindaban, taking only plain rice and milk once a day and having very few clothings. Here he had a very strange experience one night. It was his daily practice to get up before midnight and devote the rest of night to meditation and *Japa*. As he sat up, he noticed inside the room the shadowy figure of a

*Vaishnava* devotee telling his beads standing by. He appeared to be very happy on seeing the Maharaj engaged in *Japa*. The Maharaj saw him every night and was not afraid. One night being very tired, the Maharaj was sleeping heavily. All on a sudden someone gave him a push so as to throw him off his bed. As he woke up he heard a voice, saying: "Get up. It is already twelve. Won't you make *Japa*?" The Maharaj felt frightened and called out to Swami Turiyananda who occupied the next room to his: "Are you awake, Hari Maharaj? What is the time now?" Just then the temple-music indicating midnight began to play. The Maharaj afterwards remarked in connection with this incident that it was a good spirit which awakened him in this fashion to keep him engaged in the regular practice of *Sādhana*.

From Brindaban he went to Allahabad and from there, after a short stay, he went to Bindhachal accompanied by a young man, who later on became his disciple and a member of the monastic order. He had intended to pass only three days there but the stay proved much longer. One midnight, it was the dark night of the new moon, he awoke the young man who was a fine singer, and repaired with him to the temple of Vindhyavâsini. On entering the temple he asked him to sing a song, which ran thus: "O Merciful Consort of Eternity, remover of the great fear of death, O Kâli, who hast made the bosom of Time Thy abode, Thou, terrible and dark as cloud, wife of Shiva, standing on the corpse, the adorning of cemetery, who hast made human skulls Thy ornaments, be kind!" But as soon as the song began, the Maharaj went into ecstasy. His body began to shake and copious tears flew down his cheeks. He was crying like a child. The other visitors at the temple were much struck by these spiritual expressions. After some time the Maharaj came down a little to the normal state and asked him to sing

another song, of which the burden was: "I do not know, O Mother, how to call Thee." The Maharaj had by that time become normal and they returned where they lived. At Bindhachal the Maharaj had also another ecstasy. One day he went with his young companion to the temple of Ashtabhujâ, the Eight-handed Goddess. The place was very solitary. He sat down before the Mother and asked his companion to sing. That day also he at once went into ecstasy. His body began to shake and tears rolled down his cheeks. He sat thus for a long time and when he rose up with the names of the Mother on his lips, his eyes were red with the inflow of blood. On coming out of the temple he climbed on the top of the hill on which the temple was situated and sitting there plunged into deep meditation. Thus passed about three weeks at Bindhachal. Then they returned to Calcutta towards the end of 1903. During this period of *Tapasyâ* he had many divine visions and experiences, of which he casually spoke on his return to the Math, for the encouragement of the young monks; and he himself made *Râja Yoga* practices for some time.

During the rains of 1905 he had a severe attack of typhoid. He was removed from the Math to Balaram Babu's house in Calcutta for treatment. The case took a serious turn and his life was despaired of. The Divine Mother, however, spared him this time for the furtherance of Her work. After three months' suffering he was on the way to recovery. But the disease dealt a severe blow to his iron constitution. Even his memory became weak for the time being. The illness also brought about a change in his personal habits. He had all along lived a simple austere life. He used very scanty clothes. He hardly received personal service from any. But his health was so much impaired this time that it lost all power of resistance. Special care had henceforth to be taken of his health, which



made personal attendance an absolute necessity. Next winter he went to Simultala in the Santhal Perganas for a change and spent there about a month.

After his return to the Math he went to Puri *via* Cuttack and lived there continually for about a year. He had visited Puri once before, some time after the passing of Sri Ramakrishna. At the sight of the image of Jagannâth on that occasion he was so much overpowered with devotion and joy that he burst into tears, for which incident Swami Vivekananda often amused himself at his expense. At Puri he lived in the Sasiniketan of Babu Balaram Bose. Babu Atalbehari Maitra, the then Deputy Magistrate of Puri, was much attracted by his religious and exquisitely human personality. He was lovingly devoted to the Maharaj and sometimes took advantage of his love and gentleness. The Maharaj treated him with special kindness and patiently bore all the tyranny of his love. Atal Babu was a stern man of sceptical temperament. As an executive officer he was a terror to many. He came to the Maharaj very frequently and sometimes invited him to a dinner in his house. Through the influence of the Maharaj he was gradually drawn to religion. At the instance of the Maharaj he performed a *Pujâ* in his house with great festivity. He also spent a good deal of money on public charity.

In the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service in Benares he had a Ward erected in memory of his mother.

Swami Abhedananda returned to India in June, 1906. He came to Puri *via* Madras to meet the Maharaj. Swami Ramakrishnananda as well as Swami Paramananda also came with him to pay their respects to the Maharaj. The Maharaj was in joyous expectation to meet his *Gurubhâis* after a long time and received them most cordially at the station. On their arrival, he went straight to the Temple with them. Swami Premananda also came to Puri from the Math about this time. The Maharaj returned to Calcutta early in September accompanied by Swami Abhedananda and others.

The Maharaj was highly impressed with the religious atmosphere of Puri and its wholesome climatic condition. From 1906 to 1911 he spent every summer there and sometimes stayed till the end of autumn. He generally returned to the Math in the beginning of winter before the birthday festival of Swami Vivekananda and remained there till the birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna, which falls generally in March. On both the occasions, selected candidates were initiated into *Sannyâsa* and *Brahmacharya*. At Puri an aged *Sâdhu* of the place felt special attraction for him. He often came to see him and converse with him on religion.

(To be continued)

## THE UPANISADIC VIEW OF TRUTH

BY DR. MAHENDRANATH SIRCAR, M.A., PH.D.

(Continued from the last issue)

### THE ABSOLUTE : NETI NETI

*Neti* denotes that Brahman is not what meets the senses, inner and outer. It is not even the object of thought. Even the highest strength of imagination and the finest sensibility can

neither feel nor touch it, no fine vital urge can reach it. It is beyond, far beyond the grasp of human faculty.

When intuition and existence are identified, the problem of knowing Being cannot arise, for in the height of being, the ordinary conditions of know-

ledge do not prevail. But the denial of knowledge in concrete sense does not commit it to agnosticism. Knowledge is not denied of reality, though knowledge is denied in the sense of discursive and mediate reasoning.

But it is not nothing. It is the acme of existence, the essence of reality. *Neti Neti* does not deny the reality of existence, it denies all the empirical characterisation of reality. The supreme fact cannot be grasped by the ordinary process of knowledge. It escapes the effort of grasp by all the faculties that men are endowed with. Hence the highest spiritual experience and the greatest spiritual fact are beyond the pale of our knowledge.

This truth finds most emphatic expression in the *Brihadâranyaka Upanisad* :

"The Atman is not this, it is not this. It is unseizable, for it cannot be seized. It is indestructible, for it cannot be destroyed. It is unattached, for it does not attach itself. It is unbound, it does not tremble. It is not injured." (IV, 4, 22; III, 9, 26).

The same truth was taught by Bâdhva when he was questioned about the nature of Brahman. "Teach me the nature of Brahman, Reverent Sir," Bâskali besought Bâdhva. The latter remained silent. The question was again put. The sage was still silent. The enquirer still persisted. The answer came : "I teach but you do not understand. Silent is Atman." (*Samkara-Bhâsya*, III, 2, 17).

The denial of attributes and qualifications to Brahman does not reduce it to a void. The Upanisads are definite about that. The primal reality is the essence of being,—our pragmatic and conceptual limitation of thinking creates such an apprehension. So long as the pragmatic instincts are active, the mind cannot rise to the height of accepting the truth of the non-relational planes of existence, for the pragmatic instincts are fed upon the consciousness of value and reality of the relativities of existence. When, therefore, at the height

of existence the possibilities of pragmatic satisfactions are belied, the pragmatic mind refuses the highest truth and is anxious to designate it as a void. And naturally so, for the pragmatic mind has not the power to deny its inherent limitations attendant on the divided outlook of life with which it is naturally associated, and to welcome a truth which can sound its death knell. And because religious seeking is falsely identified with pragmatic satisfaction, the higher approaches to truth which cannot appeal to the pragmatic instincts are rejected by the surface mind as quests in the wilderness. The persistent demand of our vital and pragmatic instincts has, therefore, the baneful effect of confining the mind to the satisfactions of the divided life and preventing it from the superior vision of truth which denies pragmatic values. The Upanisadic conception of the spiritual truth cannot be understood, far less appreciated, if life seeks the satisfaction of pragmatic instincts.

The realistic or pragmatic consciousness is guided by its narrow vision and it cannot accept the truth which is revealed when the mind has been able to forego the limitations. And, therefore, the intuitions and revelations coming from the height of existence, transcending the pragmatic, cannot be understood and accepted by the lower mind. And because of this, the *Śruti* says that "neither the learned nor the intelligent among men can welcome this truth." And verily so, for the appreciation of truth and its final illumination require the quelling of the lower and pragmatic demands of the soul and the waking up of the finest intuitive intelligence which sees but does not understand. And so long as the requirement is not fulfilled, the highest intuitions will be lightly passed over, not that they have no realities, but that the mind has not the fine susceptibilities to feel them and correctly appraise their values. And so long as the vital and pragmatic demands are insistent with the empiric intuitions in life, the trans-

centent truth cannot make its impression, and perchance even if it does, it cannot make the impression lasting and enduring.

It is better for the correct estimate of the Upanisadic truths to indicate that its highest truth can be apprehended not so much by the process of reflection or the intuitions of the empiric and pragmatic mind, as by the supramental revelation and transcendent intuition. The thinking mind may not find much food for it in the pages of the Upanisads, save and except the fine hints pregnant with constructive suggestions, but the enquiring and the truly mystic soul will find in it sufficient food for itself, for its advance and realisation.

The mystic demand and the mystic understanding are different from the pragmatic and conceptualistic demand and understanding. Mysticism has its own claim; if the pragmatic vision could have satisfied the soul, the mystic demand and enquiry would have no value. The mystic approach would have no meaning. The mystic sees and reads life in a way different from the rational or the pragmatic method of approach, and, therefore, the truths and the conclusions which the theoretic and pragmatic mind are slow to receive and accept, the mystic consciousness unhesitatingly receives and accepts. But for this immediate acceptance of a truth that cannot be otherwise seen, felt and appreciated, the mystic claim and approach would be regarded as groundless and unconvincing. The real attraction of mysticism lies in offering a new venue of realisation and a novel method of apprehension. And this explains the fact why the simple truths felt by the mystic take the long and the circuitous method to be established by the theoretic reason. Nay, often reason stands baffled in its attempt.

And this becomes evident when the mystic claims the identity of fact and knowledge, the identity of reality and consciousness, for it is more an ex-

perience in the transcendent height of knowledge than a demonstration of logic. Logic may follow, but in the acme of consciousness the truth is felt.

This is why we see that the Upanisads have not drawn the distinction between fact and knowledge; on the other hand they have characterised the reality to be knowledge and consciousness. The Aitareya Upanisad has it in the conclusion: "All this is based on intelligence (Gnosis). The world is endowed with the vision of intelligence. The basis is intelligence. Brahman is intelligence."

Brahman denotes the highest existence. The highest existence is intelligence, or properly, consciousness. Though the Absolute is intuition, it cannot be intuited. The texts are positive about it. The Kena has: "He who knows not, knows; he who knows, knows not." (I, 2, 3). Again, the Brihadâraṇyaka (IV, 5, 15) has it: "Who has ever known the knower?" Evidently the hint is that intuition cannot be intuited. "The knower of all cannot be known."

This suggests that intuition excludes all relativity, all reference to the process and the object of knowledge. The text has also: "Brahman is immediacy of intuition. It transcends all knowledge, though it is knowledge. It is the essence of cognition, without being the cognitive process. Brahman is illumination." (Brihadâraṇyaka, III, 4, 1; III, 5; 1).

This conclusion puts into clear relief the character of the Absolute. It is one. It is intuition. It is luminosity.

But this denial of knowledge in pragmatic and concrete sense does not make the highest affirmation of the Upanisads open to agnosticism. Such charge can only arise when knowledge is defined in empiric terms or in terms of relativity. The pragmatic mind is accustomed to think in terms of relative verity, and therefore it fails to appreciate truth when it is presented in terms which do not represent the actualities of relative existence. The finest imagination cannot picture so sublime a truth, 30

dignified an existence. The Kena Upanisad is perfectly justified in saying that "it is different from the known, it is different from the unknown." The inmost truth, "the truth which cannot be perceived by the Manas, and felt by the senses," the truth which is different from the object of adoration, is the finest existence which, by its integrity and simplicity passes comprehension. And yet it is not far, it is intimate, it is too near to be fully apprehended. The highest truth is the greatest dilemma in knowledge. All knowledge presupposes it. All existence is supported in it. It is the consciousness of consciousness. It is the fact of facts. It is far and near. It is in and out. It is the whole and the parts. Still it cannot be seen, it cannot be felt. The texts are positive about it. Who has ever known the knower of all things? None can experience the revealer of experiences. It is, as the Kena points out, inherent in individual psychoses but can scarcely be felt by itself. The sun and the stars illuminate by its light, but none can express it. The world within and the world without are illumined by its light, but the brilliant orbs of the heavens cannot cast in it "their purest ray serene." The stars twinkle with its reflected light, the soul illumines with its borrowed splendour.

The mellowed brilliance of the twilight and the dawn, the dazzling brilliance of the sun, are but its shadows. It illumines the intelligence. "The sun shines not there, neither moon, nor the stars. These lightnings shine not, much less the fire. This shining, all others shine. All this is illumined with His light." (Katha, V, 15).

Intuition cannot be intuited. The Māndukya, (Verse 7) has it: "It is not an object that can either be seen or used, it defies definition and reflection, it is incomprehensible, it is essentially the knowledge of the oneness of self."

Where the object has been identified with the subject of knowledge, the

history of experience has been closed there; the Prapancha, the cosmic manifold, is withdrawn completely from this height of existence. It is, therefore, not the seed of the creation in which the world sleeps, but it is the integral existence, beyond space, beyond time, beyond the creative urges. It is the silence which is not disturbed by the gush of life, it is the great beyond from which no traveller returns, it is beyond the joys of life and the fear of death. It is the greatest wonder of existence. It is rare in its widest commonalty, it is simple in its highest dignity.

The Chhândogya is more appropriate when it says that "the sun does not truly rise and set for him who perpetually lives in the knowledge of Brahman of the Upanisads." (III, 11, 8).

In a more significant passage in the Brihadâranyaka Upanisad we are told by Yājñavalkya in reply to a question from King Janaka, that "when the sun has set, the moon has set, the fire has gone out, and speech is hushed, the soul (Atman) still shines, for the soul is his light, for with the soul, indeed, as his light, one sits, moves around, does his work and returns." (IV, 3, 6). The Svetâsvatara Upanisad also characterises the highest truth as the consciousness of consciousness, the super-conscience (VI, 18). It calls the supreme-soul Jna, conscience. It is Gnosis (VI, 17). The Brahma Upanisad characterises it as Sâksi Chetâ. It is the percipience, the conscience.

This conscience is the summit of knowledge, free as it is from the mental or supra-mental limitations. It is, therefore, to be distinguished from the wisdom of Hiranyagarbha or of Isvara, for it can reflect only the sum total of experience in the fine or causal dynamism. These are still relative verities and cannot cover the absolute intuition. The supra-mental revelations may give out the hidden mysteries laid deep in the root of existence, but cannot present the timeless intuition before us. The supra-sensuous revelations do not transcend the operation of the

causal law, they are events in time, impressed upon the Sāttvic, luminous, mind freed from the limitations of its working through the senses, but the invariable implication of a reception and a gift in knowledge is there. This reception may be very swift in psychological process, but it cannot forego the implication of reciprocity in knowledge. Revelation may open a direct access into the mysteries of the divine life in Isvara, but it cannot transcend the implication of relations in knowledge. The conscience is, therefore, unique in the sense that it transcends the implications of relations. It is self-luminous, it is luminosity of intuition as distinguished from the luminosity of Sattva. The luminosity in intuition is self-luminosity, the luminosity of Sattva is reflected luminosity. The one is luminosity of intuition, the other is the luminosity of intelligence (Buddhi). Conscience is intuition. Intuition is being.

This conscience is to be distinguished from the super-mind (Isvara) not only in the knowledge aspect, but also in the existence aspect. It is the supreme existence, and it is indestructible : supreme, because it is the ultimate reality beyond which nothing can exist. Isvara is the Absolute in reference to the creative order, and this reference makes it distinct from the Absolute, as it always implies a reference to the totality. So long as our knowledge implies reference, Isvara's being is supposed to be supreme, as it is all-embracing totality; but the moment the reference to the subjective locus is lost, the idea of the eternity of totality also drops from the mind. Eternity, therefore, has two senses : (1) eternity in the sense of the transcendence of time; and (2) eternity in the sense of existing through time. Avyaya in the former sense is true of the Absolute, i.e., Brahman transcending all relations. Avyaya in the second sense is true of Isvara, for it is an existence which is identified with time, the history of the Absolute expressing itself and subsisting through time : Isvara is then the

Absolute seen in reference to self-expression through time. The time order is an order in Isvara, it is not an order in the Absolute.

Self-expression is, therefore, strictly true of Isvara, but not of the Absolute. The Absolute in reality transcends self-expression : the limitation of self-expression is in Isvara, but not in the Absolute. The dynamism of expression does not play any part in Being and the Absolute is such a plenum beyond the ripples of dynamic expression. The Upanisads emphasise this aspect of the absolute existence, and a clear realisation of such an existence is supposed to give that undisturbed calm which is the promise of unrestricted vision and undivided life.

In this affirmation the Upanisads draw a sharp line of distinction between the conscience and the spiritual dynamism : they do not completely negate the dynamic aspect of spiritual life,—they recognise the spiritual values; but they consider them to be the partial expression of spiritual life which does not represent its complete nature and full depth. Spiritual life is, to the Upanisadic teachers, neither evolution nor emergence, for they mean an upward motion and fine expression of our inward being. The common notion of spirituality as the fine blossoming of the inward nature implies the movement of life from its gross to its fine nature. Nay, it has the implicit reference to the truth of spontaneous generation of spirituality. Just as the biologist thinks of the evolution of life out of the lifeless, similarly it is thought that the fine spirituality emerges out of the gross vitalism,—spirituality is an offshoot of vitalism in the course of its emergence into finer expression. The Upanisads cannot in the least favour such a neo-realistic or neo-vitalistic conception of spiritual life, for in such a conception not only the spiritual sense and life in man is supposed to jump into a certain stage of evolution, but also the very centre and object of spiritual life, viz.

God, is supposed to be coming into being in the course of emergent evolution.

The greatest short-coming of this theory is that it makes the fine coming out of the gross, the highest values out of the coarsest existence. It does not explain how mass and quantity can pass into the specimens of finest life and spirituality.

The Upanisads steer clear of such a conception. They do not generally believe in spiritual evolution, and when they do, they do not necessarily accept the emergence of the lower into the higher, of the grosser into the finer. The fine, to them, is a higher and truer reality and is immanent in the gross; the fine, therefore, is the essence, the gross is the appearance. In spiritual life there is no room for spontaneous generation, the spirit can be a spark of spirit, life, of life. The highest reality is spiritual, the only existence is spirit. The non-spiritual is not exactly non-spiritual, it is the shadow and the restriction of the spiritual. Spiritual life is then more a close understanding and appreciation of the essence of our being than an evolution or emergence. Spiritual evolution can be true of the divided self, which, from the self-

imposed conception of a division, sees in it the possibility of degeneration and evolution. When the perfect balance and equilibrium of the spiritual life in transcendence is lost, the spiritual life can either be active for a higher evolution, or can degenerate into death. Life, when divided from the source, can work ceaselessly for the evolution of finer instincts and powers, or degenerate into lower forms of existence which check the free flow of vitality, the quickened sense of morality and the fine intellectual and spiritual receptivity. The Upanisads recognise the path of evolution and the gradual regeneration of the spirit and illumination through successive planes of finer existence; but this has not been recognised as the right spiritual quest, for this cannot emancipate the soul from the sense of a false individuality; and however fine it grows, however delicate becomes its being and penetrative its powers, they still suffer from the original limitation and cannot rise above the perfection of powers to the right understanding of the integral being. Spiritual life is then more the installing in the silence than the search of fine being and receptivity.

*(To be concluded)*

## PROFESSOR BENOY KUMAR SARKAR ON MODERN ECONOMIC LIFE

BY SHIV CHANDRA DATTA, M.A., B.L., F.R. Econ. S.

*(Continued from the last issue)*

### (B) BANKING

Banking has made giant strides in all the advanced countries. The development of modern banking is not very old. Even in countries like Germany and France it began towards the end of the nineteenth century. (*Economic Development*, Ch. 21).

The banking systems of the modern countries differ in many details. In some the Governments merely control

the privately owned banking institutions, in others the banks are State institutions. In some there are strong and big central banks which stand as the prop and support of the other banks, in others the banks are without any central bank in the strictest sense of the term. In some there are a few big banks each with innumerable branches, in others there are a large number of independent institutions with but few branches. In some, the types

of banks are very various, in others only a few common types exist. The banking systems of the various countries also differ as regards the system adopted for the safety of the note-issue or the control over deposit business.

But, in spite of these numerous differences, banks serve one and one purpose only, *viz.*, to properly mobilize the financial resources of the country. They draw in the funds of the community which would otherwise lie idle, multiply the funds many times over through the media of notes, cheques and other credit instruments and drive those funds into the needy channels of trade and industry. The importance of banks therefore lies in the fact that they provide the funds which the innumerable firms carrying on manufacturing or commercial operations in modern countries always require in order to carry on their activities.

The industrial and commercial advance of modern Germany owes a deep debt to the development of banking. This is emphasized by Prof. Sarkar in the following passage :

“German banking which was almost *timid* in its operations down to 1895, commenced at this date an *abrupt career of expansion*. The activity has expanded, as is evident, geographically both inland and overseas. But the geographical expansion has in every instance been brought about by the *urge to tap all sorts of industries and agricultural enterprises at home as well as promote commercial ventures abroad*. The iron and steel industries of the Rhine land, the navigation and maritime trade on the Rhine, the phosphate manufactures of Hanover, the textile and food industries of Saxony, the farming interests of Southern Germany, the electrical industries of Berlin and environs—*each and one of the manifold wealth-producing factors of German life has since been consciously served by a bank or a group of banks*.

“The growth of the industries brought with them the craving for

markets and the demand for export facilities. In this commercial expansion of Germany the banks have been playing a *well thought-out and systematic plan* since 1895. Every ‘group’ of banks is an industrial as well as an export institution, the enterprise of banks contributed already in 1905 to the establishment of Germany as a world power in every sense.” (*Economic Development*, p. 80).

In their efforts to advance the economic prosperity of their country the Japanese early understood the importance of banking. The first Japanese bank to help international trade, *viz.*, the Yokohama Specie Bank (before that Japanese international trade was under the control of foreign banks), was established in 1880. Banks to help industry and agriculture (the Hypothic Bank and the Industrial Bank) were established early in the twentieth century. Banks were even established which would lend without any security, only if they were convinced that the borrower has the character and capacity to profitably utilize the loan. (*Vartaman Jagat*, Volume on Japan, p. 248).

Banks have grown in size with the growth of industry and trade. The need for financial operations on a larger scale and that for the reduction of risk of the shareholders necessitated the introduction of the joint-stock principle in the banking business. The process of trustification which is going on to-day in the region of industries, has also proceeded apace in the banking world. The amalgamation of the banks, *i.e.*, the merger of several banks into bigger units, has the same impulses (*viz.*, economy, cheapness, enhanced efficiency, etc.) which lie at the root of industrial trustification. Besides, the various economic activities of the modern world are so bewilderingly complex that, as in other spheres of modern life, a sort of rough specialization has crept into the region of banking also. Banks have grown up for the support of international trade, or of in-

land trade, or for the establishment of industries, or for the extension of short-term loans to the merchants, the expansion of existing firms into bigger ones, the floating of new concerns, helping agriculturists with loans on the mortgage of their lands, keeping safe deposits, etc.

Banks have their foundations in the confidence or trust in others. The stupendous banks of the present-day world thus arise only on the foundations of a valuable moral trait. The greater and more numerous the banks of a country, the greater, therefore, is the character and the sounder the morality of that country. Banks, therefore, serve the purpose of an instrument for an infallible measurement of the loftiness of national character. (*Arthik Unnati*, Vol. I, p. 624).

Not only that. As already said, banks constitute the centre round which the economic organizations of a country congregate. They are the foundations on which economic institutions build themselves up. They manufacture the life-force which pours vitality into industrial and commercial activities. Hence, banks are not only 'the barometers of national character,' they also constitute a faithful index to the economic strength and greatness of a nation. (*Arthik Unnati*, Vol. I, p. 623).

#### AGRICULTURE IN THE MODERN WORLD

There are scholars both in our country and abroad who are accustomed to think that agriculture is the God-ordained line of India's economic activity and that commerce and industries are the special preserves of the Eur-Americans. Prof. Sarkar, however, realized soon after his setting foot on the French soil in about 1914 that agriculture is as much cared for in that country as industry.<sup>1</sup> And this conviction

was deepened in his subsequent visit to Great Britain in the same year. He points out in the *Vartaman Jagat* (Vol. II) written at that time that agriculture in Great Britain also is carried on with the greatest possible care, that it is carried on there on a much larger scale than in India (Prof. Sarkar points out that 150 bighas are considered the minimum for cultivation with machineries and that machineries are widely used in England), that up-to-date scientific knowledge and chemical manures and labour-saving machineries are pressed into requisition in order to extract the utmost from the soil at the lowest possible cost. He also points out that various subsidiary industries, such as animal husbandry, poultry-farming, bee-rearing, etc., are resorted to side by side with agriculture in order to supplement the earnings from the tilling of the soil. He also points out that the character of modern agriculture has been very much transformed owing to the application of the co-operative principle in agricultural production, marketing and finance. Co-operative production, marketing and finance have enabled the small scale farmers to enjoy the benefits of large-scale operations. He points out that the co-operative movement in Ireland enabled Irish agriculture to regularly supply eggs and butter of uniform quality to the British market; and in this way Irish agriculture succeeded in ousting rivals such as Russia, Denmark, etc.

Agriculture cannot improve without the introduction of the best possible legislation in relation to land. It is pointed out that in this respect, as in respect to Industrial Insurance, Germany is the pioneer. In 1820-21 a law was passed in Germany providing for the consolidation of fragmented holdings. In 1882 a law was passed for the undivided inheritance of the consolidated holdings. In 1890-91 a law was passed for the purchase of land by the Government from the landlords and for the distribution of those lands among the peasants, in order to provide them

<sup>1</sup> As regards Prof. Sarkar's reflections on the balance between agriculture and industry in France and the interdependence between the two, see *Vartaman Jagat*, Vol. II., pp. 217 and 219.



with the minimum area (119 bighas)<sup>2</sup> that is necessary for the support of the cultivator and his family. In 1919 a law was passed abolishing the system of "Fidei Kommerse" (i.e., the tendency among industrial magnates to found country estates and to keep large areas in the control of their families) and preventing landlords in certain districts from holding any estate larger than 875 bighas.

The example set by Germany is regards increasing the size of the holdings through the compulsory expropriation of the landlords with indemnity (in most cases insufficient) began to be followed in Denmark in 1899 and in Great Britain in 1908. The same movement for the creation of small holdings in place of big estates has made its appearance after the War in some of the smaller states of Europe such as Czecho-Slovakia, Rumania, Yugo-Slavia and Poland.

It should be noted that not only is there the attempt to increase the size of the existing holdings, but there is also the attempt to convert the landless agricultural labourers into peasant proprietors. Besides, the newly created farmers are helped with Government loans to enable them to launch in agricultural operations.<sup>3</sup> Various restrictions also are imposed on the farmers (some of the restrictions on Danish farmers—sub-division, amalgamation or addition not allowed; inheritance to be single and undivided; not allowed to let or to build any houses to let, etc.) in the interests of the nation.

Agriculture in the modern state is

<sup>2</sup> 44 bighas in Denmark and 175 bighas in England.

<sup>3</sup> "The lands are however in many cases difficult to work and can be managed with quite liberal outlays in capital and cattle such as only 'big landowners' can command. The state is therefore coming to the aid of the peasant and seeing to it that the problem of production may be well attended to, even under the conditions of 'petite culture' such as have been created by the redistribution of the lands."—*Economic Development*, pp. 203-4.

promoted because it is considered as absolutely necessary for national self-sufficiency and for the preservation of national health and maintenance of military strength. While highly developed industrial states are trying to improve their agriculture, newly industrializing states also, e.g., Russia and the Balkan States, are not sparing their efforts for the same end.

It appears therefore that agriculture is not at all neglected in the advanced countries. In spite of it, however, the drift of men from agriculture to industries goes on unchecked. What is the reason for this? The fundamental reason is that agriculture is unpopular. It is unpopular because it is not sufficiently paying to the labourers. And low rates of wages prevail in agriculture because the incomes of the farmers are low. The incomes of the farmers in their turn are low because of the low prices of agricultural produce and high value of land. If the prevailing tendency, therefore, is allowed to go unchecked, agriculture will be made to go to the wall by industry. But because of the sociological benefits from agriculture, it is realized in modern Europe that it must be preserved and made profitable at any cost. Various methods are being adopted to make agriculture profitable—e.g. (a) co-operation; (b) internal colonizing; and (c) the small holdings movement. Prof. Sarkar quotes Dr. Hainisch as emphasizing that none of these steps will enable agriculture to thrive and that the state itself must be prepared to take agriculture out of private hands and conduct it as a national monopoly if it is to be saved from the unequal competition with industry. (*Political Philosophies since 1905*, pp. 227-8, and article on "The New Economics of Land" in *The Calcutta Review* for 1927, pp. 839-842).

#### RECENT TENDENCIES IN MODERN PUBLIC FINANCE

As in other departments of economic activity, so in public finance also, the modern world records a greater and

greater advance towards a better condition of things. Some of the leading features of modern public finance are : the attempt to study each item of taxation from the economic aspect, the exemption of a minimum income from taxation, the levying of taxes according to the ability to pay, the ever-increasing application of the progressive principle in taxation both as a means of 'equalizing the burden' and as 'a measure for the redistribution of wealth,'<sup>4</sup> the levying of higher and higher taxes with a view to developing the community in diverse directions and thus returning the money drawn from the community with tenfold benefit, etc. These show the fundamental motives and forces that are moving public finances in the advanced countries.

On this point the following extracts from Prof. Sarkar's speech, delivered at a meeting of the Indian Economic Conference held in Calcutta in 1927, will be found interesting :

"During the last generation in all the advanced countries of Europe and America, the states have been realizing, and the peoples getting used to one and one slogan and that is, 'taxes, more taxes and still more taxes.' The British theory and practice of death duties or inheritance taxes are quite well known. The extreme Bolshevistic programme of progressive taxation which constitutes virtually expropriation or confiscation of property need not be discussed for the time being. But 'capital levy' as adumbrated in England, as well as the taxes on industry as established in Czecho-Slovakia, Germany and other countries indicate which way the financial brains of contemporary mankind have been flowing. And to-day we are in the midst of an agitation in Great Britain which seeks to graduate the taxes on property in such a manner that by the third generation it ceases to remain private and escheats to the state."

<sup>4</sup> On this point see *Political Philosophies* since 1905, pp. 204 and 205.

"It is desirable to remember that the responsibilities of modern democracies are considerable. The states have been assuming on their shoulders the duty of providing to the people *almost everything that is necessary for their physical and moral uplift.*"

#### ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE OF MODERN WOMEN

The movement for the economic independence of women is very recent. It began in the advanced countries early in the twentieth century—though traces of it might be found even towards the end of the nineteenth century—and it received a tremendous push during and after the Great War.

During Prof. Sarkar's visit to England in 1914 he found women working as housekeepers, teachers, musicians, factory-workers, etc. in order to earn their livelihood. He points out that married women are compelled to work in order to meet the expenses of the family.

In the U. S. A. he found women working in large numbers as teachers, typewriters and private secretaries—apart from a large number participating in honorary and very useful social service activities.

In the course of a public lecture in Calcutta in 1927 on "Modern Women in the Economic World" he pointed out that the German women of to-day have taken to various occupations in order to earn their livelihood. The professions mentioned are the following: 1. Housekeeping. Those trained as housekeepers manage hotels, restaurants, students' hostels and also conduct model schools for boys and girls. 2. Serving as cooks and maid-servants. Even cooks and maid-servants have to get special training in schools after passing from the compulsory Government schools. These schools began to be started by the German Women's Association established in 1865 with the object of raising German women up to the modern standard. 3. The manufacture of cheap dresses, hats and other

silk, cotton and linen goods. Women cannot ply these trades unless they get certificates of competency from municipal authorities and from special technical schools after having passed from compulsory Government schools, 4. Women also work as (a) assistants in medical research laboratories, (b) assistants in hospitals, (c) research-workers in metal mines, (d) chemical examiners of food-stuffs and (e) assistants to engineers. 5. Besides, they also take to the following paid social service occupations: (a) specialists in the nursing of particular types of diseases, (b) specialists in matters affecting the health and education of children, (c) working in various types of economic institutions as collectors of up-to-date information about banking, insurance, technical matters, etc. Women cannot work as paid social service workers in any of the various capacities mentioned, unless they attain educational qualifications as high as those of Indian graduates, gain practical experience in some establishment for a certain period, get special training in some school and attain at least the age of 24 or 25.

It thus appears that in Germany an elaborate arrangement exists to enable women to specialize in various lines and thus to earn an income whereby they stand on their own feet and at the same time contribute handsomely to the economic, cultural, technical and hygienic progress of their 'fatherland.'

#### BENEFITS OF MODERN ECONOMIC LIFE

The most important advantage of modern economic life is that it has made the attainment of a high level of comfort and prosperity possible, because of the cheapening of commodities and the production of commodities on a large scale. The standard of living and the level of wages are much higher in modern countries than in those which are still in mediæval economic conditions or are still in the transitional stage between the mediæval and the

modern. Even the labourers of the modernized countries have a standard of living which is still far higher than that of the middle classes in countries like India. Because of the all-round economic development of modern countries, an expenditure of a certain sum of money will enable a person to get much greater comfort there than in the backward ones.

Another important advantage is this. Nature has not endowed every country with the best resources necessary for industrial greatness. For example, Switzerland is a small rugged country lacking in the raw materials necessary for material prosperity of a high order. Agricultural progress is not also possible there because of the rugged nature of the country. Yet, that country with a population of only 40 lakhs of people has achieved a high degree of material prosperity.<sup>5</sup> The savings of the people in Switzerland amount to 667 fr. per head (in 1835 it was 8 fr. per head) and there are only 50,000 persons who earn an income of Rs. 40 per month. The variety of industries in that country is remarkable. And she is competing with first class nations in the production of commodities such as watches, electrical machineries, etc. Even the first class nations consume enormous quantities of Swiss goods. The industrial efficiency, the international trade and the consequent material prosperity of Switzerland are such that Prof. Sarkar lovingly calls her, "a Germany in miniature." The prosperity of the Swiss has been possible because they have adopted modern

<sup>5</sup> "Switzerland with a population of four millions, i.e., forty lakhs is not larger than any two or three districts of Bengal. And it yet may be described as a power in the world's economic system . . . . Waterpower is perhaps the only resource with which nature has plentifully endowed Switzerland. 22.4 p.c. of the territory is unproductive land. And yet Switzerland happens to be one of the richest and most expensive countries of the world. The hand of men has converted this rugged mountain region into an earthly paradise from the economic point of view." (*Economic Development*, p. 246).

economic organization and modern industrial technique.

THE EVILS AND HOW THEY ARE BEING COMBATED

Just before the World War, when Prof. Sarkar paid his first visit to England, his views about modern economic life had not assumed any pronounced form. On the one hand, the prosperity of the European countries, their marvellous powers of organization, their might and splendour extorted his admiration. On the other hand, the various evils of modern economic life appeared before his eyes very prominently. His then impressions are embodied in his Bengali work, *Vartaman Jagat*, Vol. II. In numerous places of that volume he mentions the various evils of modern economic life which drew his special attention at that time. These are : (1) That the labourers suffer from ill-health; (2) that the lives of the labourers are very monotonous because they have to attend to the machineries for hours together and have to work like living machines by the side of the lifeless ones; (3) that the sense of beauty is being destroyed; (4) that the life of the labourers is full of anxiety and trouble; (5) that fresh air is difficult to get in the cities; (6) that family life is being destroyed because many of the duties (education, cooking, etc.) usually discharged by the family are now discharged by the society;<sup>6</sup> and (7) that poverty is not disappearing in spite of increase in wealth. (*Vartaman Jagat*, Vol. II, p. 612).<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> The sum and substance of Prof. Sarkar's remarks on the differences between Hindu and English families is that a Hindu family is a society in miniature, while in England the individuals are but mere units forming parts of a bigger family, viz., the society or the nation.

<sup>7</sup> But note the following passage written at almost the same time and appearing at p. 212 of *Vartaman Jagat*, Vol. II: "I have passed from the southern to the northern end of France. But I do not remember to have seen anywhere any sign of misery or

Though he was an admirer of the modern world at that time, yet his mind was full of the idea that the Hindu ideal of life is superior to that of the West. Hence, he was predisposed to interpret the British movement for small industries, revival of agriculture, etc. as but a progress towards the Hindu ideal of life.

In spite of that state of his mind, we find him deeply appreciating the heroic efforts of the Westerners in solving their own economic and social problems.

He enumerates the following as specimens of such efforts :

(1) That the rich are aware that they have obligations towards the poor. New ideals of social duty are being preached among the rich. The rich are founding charitable institutions and spending money for town-planning, housing, betterment of health, etc.;

(2) Taxation on the rich for the amelioration of the poor;

(3) The establishment of social service organizations such as the Boy Scouts movement, the Fresh Air movement, etc.;

(4) The establishment of Trade-Unions to enable the poor to combat with the capitalist class;

(5) The starting of Co-operative Societies as a solution of the poverty problem and as a means for the democratic control of business in place of the oligarchic control represented by the joint-stock firms.

In *Vartaman Jagat* (Volume on the U. S. A.), Prof. Sarkar points out that the conditions of modern life are such that the existence of the family as it has existed in the world till now, on the basis of the inferiority of the female to the male, is being destroyed and is bound to be destroyed and that the modern tendency is towards the establishment of friendly relations only between the male and the female. He does not approve or disapprove of the tendency. He is simply content with

poverty . . . Even the poor men of France appear to be happier than middle-class people in our country."

pointing his finger towards the direction in which the relations between the male and the female are gradually tending. And he also points out that the same loosening of the family bond and the establishment of the relationship between the male and the female on a basis of equality, will make their appearance in every country which will adopt the forms and processes of modern economic life.

His present attitude towards the evils of modern economic life is shortly this. He does not deny that there are evils. He is conscious especially of the following: (1) the bitterness of relations between the labourers and the capitalists; (2) the problem of alternate industrial booms and depressions;<sup>a</sup> (3) the unpopularity of agriculture and the growing exodus from the village into the town; (4) the evils of trustification, etc.

But he forcefully points out that the moderns are doing their best to combat them and have been considerably successful in that direction. He also points out that it does not befit those who occupy a lower level of economic life to stick to it with tenacity and to refuse to advance to the higher level simply because of a magnified conception of the evils of that life without considering the advantages attendant thereon.

#### FUTURE OF MAN'S ECONOMIC LIFE

Prof Sarkar points out two important factors that will become important elements in the future economic life of mankind:

<sup>a</sup> The institution of systematic researches into the problem of industrial crises, e.g., by the Crises Institutes of Berlin, Harvard, Vienna, etc.; the undertaking of development works by the states in times of industrial depression; and the administration of all the economic activities of the country by a central body of economists, statisticians and technical experts—are referred to as some of the remedies tried in order to meet the problem of industrial crises. (*Political Philosophies since 1905*, pp. 232, 241 and 248).

#### 1. SOCIALISM

Modern economic life is organized on a capitalistic basis. Private initiative due to the incentive of profits appropriable by private individuals provide the main stimulus for modern economic activities. The working classes however demand that the agents of production, distribution and exchange should cease to be private properties and should become properties of the community, so that profits, rent and interest would not remain appropriable by private individuals but would go to the community.

Till now, practical experimentation in socialism on a national scale has taken place in one country only and that too has found it necessary to partially revert to capitalism and also has been attended with many unhappy features. Nevertheless, Prof. Sarkar points out that socialism is the end towards which modern economic organization is gradually tending. The activities of modern Governments to-day are more or less socialistic. The principles of modern taxation have become tinged with socialism. Economics is no longer a science for the accumulation of wealth—it is a science for the advance of the material welfare of all classes of people.<sup>a</sup> Labourers are growing in power and capitalists are becoming more reasonable and in many cases are gracefully yielding. The world thus is making slow but steady advance to a state of things in which the productive and distributive activities would be carried on not for the profits of a few private individuals but for the benefit of society at large.

#### 2. ECONOMIC OPERATIONS ON A WORLD BASIS

To-day modern countries are organized on a nationalistic basis. Efforts on the part of modern states for the develop-

<sup>a</sup> The Preface to Prof. Sarkar's *Economic Development and Greetings to Young India*, p. 45.

ment of agriculture and industries have but one principal motive, viz., to strengthen the nation and each unit of the nation. Political nationalism provides a good deal of the energism that compels the participation of the modern state in economic activities. The wide prevalence of Protectionism is the best illustration of this fact. Whatever of international co-operation there is, exists not because of any solicitude for the welfare of mankind, but because the co-operating nations (or organizations) find combined action necessary for their own development.

Prof. Sarkar, however, expects that the day would soon dawn when economic problems would be studied and economic activities carried on, not with a view to advancing the material interests of a particular section of mankind but those of mankind at large. This was

made clear in a speech delivered at the Grand Hotel, Calcutta, on 21st July, 1926. We quote the last para from that speech :

"In the *near future* the legal, economic, and political relations between nations are *going to lose much of their traditional significance*. International intercourse bids fair to assume the character of a *round-table study* of the raw materials, human agencies, and financial resources of the world with a view to the *fullest utilization of each in the interest of the happiness of mankind*. The patriots and nationalists of the different sections of the world *must have to reshape their philosophies and policies en rapport* with the demands of this *new era of interdependence, mutual exploitation and world economy*." (*Greetings to Young India*, p. 76; also see p. 117).

(Concluded)

## EARLY HELLENIC-CHRISTIAN MYSTICISM AND ITS RELATION TO HINDU MYSTICISM\*

BY ROMAIN ROLLAND

The keystone of the edifice—and the whole edifice itself—the *alpha* and *omega* of the work—is "Super-eminent Unity"—"Unity the mother of all other unity." And the grandeur of his definitions and negations which seek, less to attain than to invoke It, is equal and parallel to Vedāntic language. . . . "Without reason, without understanding, without name. . . . Author of all things, nevertheless It is not, because It surpasses all that is. . . ." "Itself not being," but "the cause of being to all," and that which is included in the same title as the Non-Being.

Everything is reduced to this unique object, which is at the same time the

unique subject. It is an intoxication of unity, wherein intelligence without ever losing its clarity gives itself to the torrential flood of immense Love and its "circular" river :

"Divine love (which is the smooth flowing of the ineffable Unity) indicates distinctly Its own unending and unbeginning, as it were a sort of ever-lasting circle, whirling round in unerring combination, by reason of the Good . . . and ever advancing and remaining and returning in the same and throughout the same."

The whole world then is subject to divine gravitation, and the movement of all beings is a march towards God. The sole aim of all conscious spirits is to "find their perfection in being carried to the Divine imitation . . . and what is more Divine than all, in becoming a fellow-worker with God."

And the "imitation" may be done in an infinite number of ways, for "each

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... find their perfection in being carried to the Divine imitation in their own proper degree;" and he will become most like Him "who have participated in It in many forms."

But there are three principal ways of approach to Him. And each of the three may be followed in two ways, by *Affirmation* and *Negation*.

The two affirmative ways are :

1. By a knowledge of the qualities and attributes of God, attained by the symbols of the Divine Names, which "the divine oracles" (that is to say, the Scriptures) have provided for our infirmity of spirit.

2. By the method of all that exists—the created worlds : for God is in all creatures, and the imprint of His seal may be found on all matter, although the mark of the seal varies according to the different kinds of matter. All the worlds are united in one river. The laws of the physical world correspond to the laws of the higher world. It is then lawful to seek God under the veil of the most humble forms, for "all the streams" of love—even animal love, which therein finds its justification) participate in holy Love, their unique source.

But all these means that we possess,—thanks to the tenderness of God, who proportions His light to the weak eyes of humanity and places forms and shapes around the formless and shapeless, and under the manifold and the complex conceals Unity—are imperfect. And the other path, that of negation, is higher, and more worthy, it is more certain, and goes further.

Few there are, "even in the sacred ranks," who attain to the One, and yet some exist. "There are spirits among us called to a like grace, as far as it is possible for man. . . . They are those who, by the suspension of all intellectual operation enter into intimate union with the ineffable light. And they speak of God only through negations. . . ."

The great path of Negation is the object of a special treatise, famous from

medieval to modern times : *The Treatise of Mystic Theology*.

In it Denis instructed an initiate, Timotheus, although he told him to keep these mysteries a strict secret (for their knowledge is dangerous to unprepared minds). He taught him the entry into what he calls "Divine Gloom," and which he explained in his letters as "unapproachable light," and also that "mystic ignorance," which being very different from ordinary ignorance, "in its superior sense, is a knowledge of Him, who is above all known things. . . . This absolute and happy ignorance constitutes knowledge of Him who surpasses all the objects of human knowledge."

Man must "abandon moderate negations for stronger and stronger ones. . . . And we may venture to deny everything about God in order to penetrate into this sublime ignorance," which is in verity sovereign knowledge. He uses the beautiful simile of the sculptor's chisel removing the covering of stone, "and bringing forth the inner form to view, freeing the hidden beauty by the sole process of curtailment."

The first task is to tear the veil of "sensible things."

The second task is to remove the last garments : the trappings of "intelligible things."

The actual words deserve to be quoted :

"It is neither soul nor mind, nor has imagination or opinion, or reason, or conception; neither is expressed nor conceived; neither is number nor order; nor greatness nor littleness; nor equality nor inequality; nor similarity nor dissimilarity; neither is standing nor moving; nor at rest; neither has power, nor is power nor light; neither lives nor is life; neither is essence nor eternity nor time; neither is Its touch intelligible, neither is It science, nor truth, nor kingdom, nor wisdom; neither one, nor oneness; neither Deity, nor Goodness, nor is It spirit according to our understanding; neither Sonship nor Paternity; nor any other thing of

those known to us or to any other existing being; neither is It any of non-existing or of existing things, nor do things existing know It, as It is; nor does It know existing things *qua* existing; neither is there expression of It, nor name nor knowledge; neither is It darkness, nor light; nor error nor truth; neither is there any definition at all of It, nor any abstraction. But when making the predications and abstractions of things after It, we neither predicate nor abstract from It; since the all-perfect and uniform cause of all is both above every definition and the pre-eminence of Him, who is absolutely freed from all, and beyond the whole, is also above every abstraction."

Is there any religious Hindu who will not recognise in the intellectual intoxication of this total Negation the Advaitic teachings of absolute Jnâna Yoga after it has arrived at the fact of realisation?

At this point in the conquest of the Divine, the achievement of the "Unreasonable, the cause of all reason," the liberated and enlightened soul enters into the Peace and Silence of Unity. It does not see God, it does not know Him: "it rests there." It is deified. It no longer speaks of God; it is God Himself:

"But you will find that the Word of God calls gods, both the Heavenly Beings above us, and the most beloved of God, and holy men amongst us, although the Divine Hiddenness is transcendently elevated and established above all, and no created Being can properly and wholly be said to be like unto It, except those intellectual and rational Beings, who are entirely and wholly turned to Its Oneness as far as possible, and who elevate themselves incessantly to Its Divine illuminations, as far as attainable, by their imitation of God, if I may so speak, according to their power, and are deemed worthy of the same Divine name."

From that moment the "deified"—the saint who is united to God—having drunk from the source of the Divine

sun, becomes in his turn a sun to those below. "Through the imitation of God and by His decrees, each superior nature is in a way a source of illumination for inferior natures, for, like a canal, it allows the flow of divine light to reach the latter."

And gradually the light spreads through all the ranks of the double Hierarchy of the celestial and the human, in an unbroken chain linking the humblest to the highest. Moreover, this hierarchy is reflected in each individual. "In every human intelligence there are faculties of the first, second, or third order, corresponding to the three kinds of illumination appropriate to each hierarchy. . . . For nothing shuts out the possibility of ulterior perfecting, except for the topmost pinnacle of primitive and infinite perfection."

This perfecting is the object of initiation, whereby souls are made to pass through three stages: (1) purification; (2) illumination; (3) consummation in the perfect knowledge of the splendours.

To the first rank of the initiated belong those religious monastics, who like the Sannyâsins of India are under the vow of complete purification. They "remove their mind from the distraction of multiple things, and precipitate themselves towards Divine unity and the perfection of holy love." Their perfect philosophy "is trained to the knowledge of the commandments whose aim is the union of man and God."

But it is not necessary to belong to a privileged order to attain this knowledge of the Divine Unity. For It is inscribed in each one. "The Divine light is always unfolded beneficently to the intellectual visions," even to those who reject it. If it is not seen, it is because a man cannot see it. And the proper business of initiation is to teach him to see it. "God being the principle of that holy institution which teaches souls to know themselves, whoever wishes to consider his own nature must first know what it is." He has only



to contemplate himself with "un-biassed eyes." Purification, symbolised by ritual ablutions, does not only concern the body and the senses, but the spirit as well. The unalterable condition of realising communion (in the sense of the eucharistic sacrifice) is to be "purified even to the remotest illusions of the soul."

This word "illusions" used in such a sense is like an echo of the Hindu *Mâyâ*. I often thought of the latter when I saw the long and beautiful explanation of Evil in the system of the Areopagite; for they use the same terms to deny both being and non-being :

"Evil is neither being, for then it would not be absolutely evil, nor non-being, for this transcendental appellation can only belong to that contained in the sovereign good in a sovereign fashion."

"Evil has neither fixity, nor identity, it is varied, indefinite, as if floating in subjects which do not possess immutability in themselves. . . . Evil, as evil, is not a reality. It is not a being. . . . Evil as evil is nowhere . . ."

Everything exists only in and through the Good, which is the "Super-eminent Unity."

At every moment there is the feeling that the links with the East are still intact and it is difficult to disentangle them. When he describes the ceremonies to be rendered to the dead, Denis thinks of the "loud laugh" or disdainful smile of some profane persons, when faced with rites implying a belief that seems to them absurd. And he alludes to the opposite belief in Re-incarnation. But he does not oppose it with the pitying scorn that he expects from his adversaries. He says with admirable forbearance that in his opinion it is wrong :

"Some of them imagine that the souls go away into other bodies; but this seems to me unjust to the bodies who have shared the works of holy souls, since they are unworthily deprived of

the divine rewards awaiting them at the end of the way . . ."

## VI

The Areopagite in his religious construction uses many materials that are to be found in the construction of Indian thought. And if there is nothing to justify the view that the one has borrowed from the other, it must be granted that they both of them come from a common quarry. I have neither the means nor the desire to find out what it is. My simple knowledge of the human spirit leads me to discover it in the unity of thought and laws that govern the spirit. The primordial instinct, the desire for mystic union with the Absolute, that is embedded in each individual and that urges each man towards It, has very limited means of expression; and its great paths have been traced once and for all by the exigencies and limitations of nature itself. Different races merely take with them over the same roads their different temperaments, habits and preferences.

In my opinion the following is what distinguishes a Christian mystic imbued with the Hellenic spirit from the Indian Vedântist :

It is quite obvious that the former contains the genius of imperial order which demands good government. A harmonious and strict "Hierarchy" controls the whole edifice of the Areopagite. The associated elements cohere and are ordered with justice, prudence, and lucidity. And in that union each one keeps its own place and its own identity. The vital instinct of the European is to cling to the smallest portions of his individuality and to desire to perpetuate them, and this instinct is curiously wedded to the elementary force of mystic gravitation which tends to lose the multiplicity of beings and forms in the incandescent gulf of Unity. "The Divine Peace," described by Denis in one of his most beautiful hymns, is that perfect peace which ought to reign over the entire universe and in each individual, and

which both unites and distinguishes all the elements that constitute the general harmony. It "reconciles" the diverse substances with each other and reunites them without altering them, so that in their alliance there is neither separation nor distance, but they keep the integrity of their own proper sphere and do not lose their own nature by an admixture of contrary elements; nothing disturbs either their unanimous concert or the purity of their own particular essence.

This desire to safeguard the integrity and the continuance of individuals even in the bosom of the absolute Being, is so powerful in Denis' case that he justifies not only natural inequality, but (within Divine Peace itself) the fighting instinct that drives each individual to defend the preservation of its essence, and even the cruelties of nature, so long as they correspond to the laws of types and elements.

Another dominant characteristic of Christian mysticism is the super-eminent place it gives to Goodness and Beauty. It comes from its double descent—noble on both sides—from Christ and Greece. The word Beauty appears in the very first words of Denis. Beauty is the very quality of the Infinite. It is the source and the end of humanity.

And Goodness to a still higher degree. It is the very source of Being. It is the Divine Origin. The Areopagite puts it in the place of the Gaurisankar of the Divine Himalayas, at the zenith of the Attributes of God. It is as the sun, but infinitely more powerful. From it issues everything else that is: light, intelligence, love, union, order, harmony, eternal life. Even Being, "the first of all the gifts of God," is the offspring of Goodness. It is the first-born.

This point of view is apparently very different from Hindu Mysticism, where the Absolute reigns supreme above good and evil. But it communicates to the Areopagite's whole thought a serenity, a tranquil and certain joy, without any of the tragic shades of a Vivekananda.

But we must not deceive ourselves: the word Goodness in the mouth of

Denis has little in common with Christian sentimentalism. Neither the "Divine Peace," nor Divine Goodness, passes over in its scheme of things the mass of weakness, violence, and suffering in the universe: they all go to make up its symphony; and each dissonance if it is in the right place adds to the richness of the harmony. It does not even forbid the chastisement of error, if that error violates the laws inherent in human nature, for nature has endued every man with liberty; "and it is not a function of Providence to destroy nature." On the other hand, it must "watch" that the integrity of each individual nature is maintained, and with it the integrity of the whole universe and of each of its parts. And that is what is meant by "universal salvation."

It is clear that all these different names: Providence, Salvation, Goodness and Peace express no shallow optimism. Their conception arises from an uncompromising and disillusioned view of nature. They demand an intrepidity of heart and mind, not far removed from the heroism of a Vivekananda, but it was better able to keep command of the immovable serenity of a great soul that is one with the Sovereign Unity and wedded to its eternal designs.

The atmosphere in which Denis' ideas are steeped is less moral, in the ordinary sense, than cosmic, and its temperature is closer to that of Indian Mysticism than to simple Christian thought, which rallies round the Crucified nameless multitudes of the humble and oppressed. The energies are maintained by the impersonal command of nature's laws, which combine and unite the elements in all their multiplicity. But the order of the Areopagite has this advantage over the Indian, that it partakes of the harmony of Greek reason and the Roman genius of imperial organisation. Denis, we feel strongly, is obliged to satisfy the double exigencies of the Hellenic mind nourished on Eastern thought and the evangelistic heart filled

with the dream of the crucified Saviour. He has encircled the Christ with a rich halo of Alexandrine speculation, and as a result the fascination of the halo has in a measure eclipsed the Christ. The first who approached its circle of light like John Scot Erigene was blinded by it. He was the only man of his century to come into contact with them, and to live in long and secret communion with this mysterious work; for he was almost the only living man of his age who understood the language in which it was written. He drank of the mystic draught, and from it he imbibed the secret, so dangerous to orthodoxy, of the freedom of the mind that is intoxicated by symbols, wherein the letter of the Christian faith is little by little drowned in the limitless and unfathomable ocean of the One. By way of Denis, Plotinus, Philo, the Infinite of Asia filtered through him into the religious soul of the West. The Church condemned him in vain in the thirteenth century. He flourished openly in the enchanted philtre of the great mystics of the fourteenth century, the most intoxicated of them, Meister Eckhart, being condemned by the Avignon Papacy.

That is why it is easy to understand the prudence wherewith the Church to-day cancels even though it honours "the Pseudo-Denis"—"that old, equivocal, obscure, uncertain and dangerous master," as he was called by the French historian best qualified to write of Western mysticism. Nobody can deny that the judgment was correct from the orthodox point of view,—although ten centuries of orthodoxy had been nourished upon Denis; and were none the worse for it! But we, who do not trouble ourselves about orthodoxy, who are guided by the attraction of the great sources of intelligence and a common love of humanity, have rejoiced to discover and to show in the work of the Areopagite—to use again Ramakrishna's ingenious parable—one of the flights of steps leading to the reservoir with several ghâts. There from one of the ghâts Hindus fetch the water which

they call Brahman. And from another Christians draw the water which they call Christ. But it is always the same water.

## VII

To sum up : the following in my opinion are the three chief lessons that Hindu religious thought should be interested to learn, and to take from European Mysticism :

1. The architectural sense of Christian metaphysicians. I have just described it in the work of Denis; and his sovereign art is to be found throughout the Middle Ages. The men who raised the cathedrals, carried into the construction of the mind the same genius of intelligent order and harmonious balance that made them the master builders of the arches linking the Infinite to the finite.

2. The psychological science of the Christian explorers of the "Dark Night" of the Infinite. In it they expended a genius, at least equal—(sometimes superior)—to that which has since been deviated into profane literature, through the theatre and the novel. The psychology of the mystic masters of the sixteenth century in Spain and the seventeenth century in France foreshadowed that of the classical poets : and modern thinkers who imagine that they have discovered the Subconscious have scarcely reached the same level. It goes without saying that their interpretations differ. But the essential point is not the interpretation, the name given by the mind to what it sees—but *what it sees*. The eyes of Western mystics reached to the limits of the inaccessible.

3. The formidable energies that Western mysticism uses to achieve Divine Union, in particular the passionate violence of the European accustomed to battle and action. It devoured Ruysbroeck, so that his Bhakti (Love) sometimes took on the guise of the Seven Deadly Sins : "Implacable Desire," the fury of mortal "Combat," the "torrent of delights" and the embrace of carnal possession,

and the colossal hunger of the Epicurean. Similarly the "*Irascibilis*" of Eckhart whose Soul being identical to God's, "cannot bear anything above it, even God Himself," and so seizes Him by force.

In these three directions I believe that Indian Mysticism might find sources of enrichment. And further, I believe that it is part of Vivekananda's own spirit to point them out to it. His great Advaitism was continually pre-occupied in enlarging and completing his conception of Unity. He sought to annex all the energies that other races and other religions had used in the service of this heroic conquest. And his faith in the "God-Man" was so disinterested that, in order to serve it, he lowered his high Indian pride and his ardent patriotism before any people whoever they might be, if they seemed to him to be striving more effectively for the common cause. Without really realising the depths hidden in the mystic

soul of the West, he had an intuition that the East might find abundant spiritual resources in the West, and that together they might realise complete Advaitism—that is to say, the religious Unity of the whole human family. It is then under his aegis that I present to India this short summary of Christian Advaitism, from its Attic cradle of Alexandria. Over that cradle, as over the Manger, the star of the East rested.\*

\*We regret we do not find it possible to agree with the conclusions of the learned writer. We hope to be able to state our reasons in a future issue. For the present it is enough to mention that his characterisation of Hindu thought does not appear to us to be quite true, that what he considers to be the excellences of Denis' thought, appear to us as philosophic deficiencies, and that we are not aware that Swami Vivekananda ever believed that the East might find abundant spiritual resources in the West. This is not however to say that the East has nothing to learn from the West, or that the object which the great author is trying to realise,—the union of the East and the West—is not eminently desirable.

## ASHTAVAKRA SAMHITA

BY SWAMI NITYASWARUPANANDA

विरक्तो विषयद्वेष्टा रागी विषयलोलुपः ।

ग्रहमोक्षविहीनस्तु न विरक्तो न रागवान् ॥ ६ ॥

विषयद्वेष्टा One who abhors the objects of the senses विरक्तः unattached ( भवति is )  
विषयलोलुपः one who covets sense-objects रागी attached ( भवति is ) ग्रहमोक्षविहीनः one  
without acceptance or renunciation तु but विरक्तः unattached न not रागवान् attached न  
not ( भवति is ).

6. One who abhors the sense-objects, avoids<sup>1</sup> them, and one who covets them, becomes attached to them. But he<sup>2</sup> who does not accept or reject, is neither unattached nor attached.

[<sup>1</sup> Avoids—lit. gets disgusted with and therefore renounces. This attempt at avoiding shows that one has not realised all as the Self.

<sup>2</sup> He etc.—A higher state is that in which all is realised as Self and therefore there is no thought of accepting or rejecting anything.]

हेयोपादेयता तावत् संसारविटपाङ्कुरः ।

स्पृहा जीवति यावद्वै निर्विचारदशास्पदम् ॥ ७ ॥

यावत् As long as निर्विचारदशास्पदं the abode of the state of indiscrimination स्पृहा desire जीवति lives तावत् so long वै indeed संसारविटपाङ्कुरः the branch and the sprout of the world हेयोप-देयता the sense of the acceptable and the rejectable ( जीवति lives ).

7. As long as desire which<sup>1</sup> is the abode of the state of indiscrimination continues, there will verily be the sense of attachment<sup>2</sup> and aversion, which is the branch<sup>3</sup> and sprout of the (tree of) *Samsāra*.

[<sup>1</sup> Which etc.—Desire robs us of the power of understanding the true nature of the world. It makes us consider the unreal to be real and the real to be unreal. When desire goes, all things appear to us as they really are.

<sup>2</sup> Attachment etc.—wanting certain things and rejecting others.

<sup>3</sup> Branch etc.—The trunk and the root of the tree of *Samsāra* (the phenomenal life with all its subjective and objective implications) is ignorance. Desire which makes us want certain things and reject others, is as it were its branches and sprouts which make the tree grow more and more. One desire leads to another and thus *Karma* grows complex and leads us from birth to death and death to birth.]

प्रवृत्तौ जायते रागो निवृत्तौ द्वेष एव हि ।

निर्द्वन्द्वो बालवद्दीमानेवमेव व्यवस्थितः ॥ ८ ॥

प्रवृत्तौ In activity रागः attachment निवृत्तौ in abstention द्वेषः aversion एव surely हि verily जायते is born दीमान् the man of wisdom बालवत् like a child निर्द्वन्द्वः free from the pairs of opposites ( सन् being ) एवम् thus एव verily व्यवस्थितः established.

8. Activity begets attachment, abstention<sup>1</sup> from it aversion. The man of wisdom is free from the pairs of opposites like<sup>2</sup> a child, and he lives<sup>3</sup> on verily as such.

[<sup>1</sup> Abstention etc.—The idea of abstention arises from the consideration that certain things and actions are harmful,—hence the feeling of aversion. To be above such attachment and aversion is higher.

<sup>2</sup> Like etc.—The meaning is obvious.

<sup>3</sup> Lives etc.—Not only is he free from the pairs of opposites inwardly, but his outward life is also like that of a child,—playful without any set purpose. This is the highest spiritual state—that of a *Paramahansa*.]

हातुमिच्छति संसारं रागी दुःखजिहासया ।

वीतरागो हि निर्दुःखस्तस्मिन्नपि न खिद्यति ॥ ९ ॥

रागी One who is attached दुःखजिहासया wishing to avoid sorrow संसारं world हातुं to renounce इच्छति desires वीतरागः one who is free from attachment हि indeed निर्दुःखः free from sorrow ( भवति is ) ( सः he ) तस्मिन् there अपि even न not खिद्यति feels miserable.

9. One who is attached to the world wants to renounce it in<sup>1</sup> order to avoid sorrow. But one<sup>2</sup> without attachment is free from sorrow and does not feel miserable even there.<sup>3</sup>

[<sup>1</sup> In etc.—thinking that the cause of sorrow is in the world.

<sup>2</sup> *One etc.*—It is not the world but attachment to it that is the root of all miseries. Free from attachment, one can live as happily in the world as anywhere else.

<sup>3</sup> *There*—in the world.]

यस्याभिमानो मोक्षेऽपि देहेऽपि ममता तथा ।

न च ज्ञानी न वा योगी केवलं दुःखभागसौ ॥ १० ॥

यस्य Whose मोक्षे in liberation अपि even अभिमानः egoistic feeling (or self-conceit) तथा so also देहे in body अपि even ममता sense of 'mine'-ness (ownership) (अस्ति is) असौ he ज्ञानी wise न not च (expletive) योगी Yogi न not वा or केवलं only दुःखभाक् sufferer of misery (भवति is).

10. He who has an egoistic<sup>1</sup> feeling even towards liberation and considers even the body as his own, is neither a Jnâni nor a Yogi. He only suffers<sup>2</sup> misery.

[<sup>1</sup> *Egoistic etc.*—The word *abhimâna* can be differently interpreted. It may mean simply a reference to egoism, or it may mean actual self-conceit. In the former sense, the verse would mean: Knowledge, *Jnâna*, is a state of complete elimination of the ego. So long as one thinks, 'I shall be free,' or 'I am free,' he holds on to the ego, and has thus neither true *Jnâna* nor *Moksha*. In the latter sense, one may become proud of his spiritual achievements. Such pride is, of course, the very antithesis of *Jnâna*. Similarly of *Yoga* and of the attachment to body.

<sup>2</sup> *Suffers etc.*—Because to think that one has *Jnâna* or *Yoga* and yet be full of egoism is a sad state of delusion and begets misery.]

हरो यदुद्यपदेष्टा ते हरिः कमलजोऽपि वा ।

तथापि न तव स्वास्थ्यं सर्वविस्मरणाद्वृत्ते ॥ ११ ॥

यदि If हरः Shiva हरिः Hari कमलजः Lotus-born (Brahmâ) वा or अपि even ते your उद्यपदेष्टा instructor (भवति becomes) तथापि yet सर्वविस्मरणात् च्छते without forgetting all तव your स्वास्थ्यं establishment in Self न not (भवति is).

11. Let even<sup>1</sup> Hara, Hari or the lotus-born Brahmâ be your instructor, but<sup>2</sup> unless<sup>3</sup> you forget all, you cannot be established in the Self.

[<sup>1</sup> *Even*—indicating that instruction by such instructors must be generally very efficacious.

<sup>2</sup> *But*—Even such potent instruction will fail if the supreme condition is not fulfilled.

<sup>3</sup> *Unless etc.*—This is the supreme condition: One must be aware of the Self only, of nothing else. To be aware of anything else is to create a division in one's consciousness.]

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE TRUE KNOWER

अष्टावक्र उवाच ।

तेन ज्ञानफलं प्राप्तं योगाभ्यासफलं तथा ।

तृप्तः स्वच्छेन्द्रियो नित्यमेकाकी रमते तुयः ॥ १ ॥

अष्टावक्रः Ashtavakra उवाच said :

यः Who तु (expletive) तृप्तः contented स्वच्छेन्द्रियः with senses purified (सन् being) नित्यं ever एकाकी alone रमते enjoys तेन by him ज्ञानफलं the fruit of Knowledge तथा as well as योगाभ्यासफलं the fruit of the practice of Yoga प्राप्तं is gained.

Ashtavakra said :

1. He has gained the fruit of Knowledge as well as of the practice of Yoga, who, contented<sup>1</sup> and with purified<sup>2</sup> senses, ever enjoys<sup>3</sup> in solitude.<sup>4</sup>

[<sup>1</sup> *Contented*—wanting nothing, knowing oneself as all.

<sup>2</sup> *Purified etc.*—not being attached to any object. So long as the senses are attached to their objects they are impure.

<sup>3</sup> *Enjoys*—his own Self which is all.

<sup>4</sup> *Solitude*—both in the outer and inner sense, especially the inner. A man of realisation generally likes solitude, and in the inner sense, he is absolutely solitary, because he feels his Self alone existing, and nothing else.]

न कदाचिज्जगत्सिन् तत्तुहो हन्त खिद्यति ।

यत एकेन तेनेर्द पूर्णं ब्रह्माण्डमण्डलम् ॥ २ ॥

हन्त Oh खिद्यन् this जगति in world तत्तुहो knower of Truth कदाचित् ever न not खिद्यति feels misery यतः for एकेन alone तेन by himself इदं this ब्रह्माण्डमण्डलम् the circular universe पूर्णं filled.

2. Oh, the knower<sup>1</sup> of Truth is never miserable in this world, for the whole universe is filled by himself alone.

[<sup>1</sup> *Knower etc.*—The sense of misery is possible only with the perception of duality. When one perceives nothing but himself in the whole universe, he cannot be touched by any sorrow.]

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

*Discourses on Jnana Yoga* by SWAMI VIVEKANANDA will be concluded next month. . . . In *What India Taught Me*, M.B.C. embodies the lesson she learnt when she visited India some time back. M.B.C. is an English lady, two little pieces by whom had previously appeared in *Prabuddha Bharata*. . . . Professor Benoy Kumar Sarkar on *Modern Economic Life* by SHIV CHANDRA DATTA, M.A., B.L., F.R. ECON. S. is concluded in the present issue, so also *Early Hellenic-Christian Mysticism and its Relation to Hindu Mysticism* by ROMAIN ROLLAND.

### MAETERLINCK ON INDIA

Sir John Woodroffe has kindly sent us the following for publication in *Prabuddha Bharata* :

In his last book, *The Magic of the Stars* (English translation), Maurice Maeterlinck speaks of "the great days of ancient India which gave birth to the

profoundest agnostic Pantheism the world has ever known, a Pantheism whose rays suffused the Egypt of the Pharaohs," (p. 211) and says: "The ancient religion of India in the far distant ages was alone in its realisation of these vast unsolvable problems. It held the moving universe and the motionless void to be an illusion that appears and disappears in accord with the endless rhythm of the sleep and awakening of the eternal Cause. That eternal Cause exhales; worlds are born and multiply; inhales—matter returns to spirit, the worlds vanish to appear again at the next awakening, millions of years, and to go back again millions of years later at the next approach of slumber; and so, for all eternity, without pause and without term." "Has," he asks, "a grander conception ever been found of the incomprehensible, that will remain incomprehensible to the end? And is the trend of science not in this direction?" (pp. 102, 108).

He finds (p. 151) that we do not get a profounder or more satisfying conception of God from Dr. Whitehead, who is one of the leading philosopher-scientists of the day, than is found in the Vedas.

### MODERN CYNICISM AND ITS REMEDY

Bertrand Russell who needs no introduction at our hands, lately contributed an article to an American magazine on *Why Modern Youth is Cynical*. Russell tells us that the intelligent young of the present day are cynical to a far greater extent than was the case formerly. "Not only are the young unable to believe what they are told, but they seem also unable to believe anything else." The old ideals no longer inspire the old loyalties.

Russell shows how religion, country, progress, beauty and truth have lost their old influences on men. Religion is intellectually unsound,—the God of most moderns is a little vague. Patriotism no longer attracts,—"it is obvious to all intelligent young men that patriotism is the chief curse of our age and will bring civilization to an end if it cannot be mitigated." Similarly of progress, beauty and truth. "Myself when young accepted this view (that truth was absolute, eternal and superhuman) and devoted a misspent youth to the search for truth. But a whole host of enemies have risen to slay truth: pragmatism, behaviorism, psychologism, relativity-physics. . . . It is difficult to worship a merely human and relative truth."

Not these alone. There are also other reasons for cynicism. "The effect of mass production and elementary education is that stupidity is more firmly entrenched than at any other time since the rise of civilization. . . . The work of the intellectuals is ordered and paid for by governments or rich men whose aims probably seem absurd, if not pernicious, to the intellectuals concerned. But a dash of cynicism enables them to adjust their consciences to the situa-

tion." This then is the reason: Intellectually we are fine, but by action and mode of life, gross. This conflict is at the foundation of modern life.

What is the remedy then, according to Russell? "The cure will come only when intellectuals can find a career that embodies their creative impulses. I do not see any prescription except the old one advocated by Disraeli: 'Educate our masters.' " The intellectuals are to change the tastes of the stupid rich who are now holding the stage. "How pleasant a world would be in which no man was allowed to operate on the Stock Exchange unless he could pass an examination in economics and Greek poetry, and in which politicians were obliged to have a competent knowledge of history and modern novels." "Causation in the modern world is more complex and remote in its ramifications than it ever was before, owing to the increase of large organizations, but those who control these organizations are ignorant men who do not know the hundredth part of the consequences of their actions."

We regret we do not find the remedy adequate. It is not always to the ignorance of consequences that the wicked activities of the modern financiers, politicians or industrialists are due. They often know what will happen. Yet they go on. In fact, if we closely study the activities of the Western powers in the East, we often find them actuated by a full knowledge of the possible reactions of their depredations. The root-cause, in our opinion, is that there has been a general degradation of *taste*,—knowledge or no knowledge. Suppose a modern magnate knew what effect his making a corner in wheat would produce upon German poetry, why should he care whether his action told adversely on it or not? Russell is quite right when he says that the old ideals are lost. But unless new *ideals* have been discovered, there is no hope for the moderns. For ultimately it is ideals that count. Mere knowledge and capacity are nothing without



ideals. Unfortunately, Russell has no faith in ideals.

We should not end this note without quoting his views about India, which are certainly funny. Russell does not believe that cynicism is true of the whole world. He excepts Russia, China, Japan, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Poland, Germany (partly) and India. He gives his reasons for this exception. Of India he says :

“In India the fundamental belief of the earnest young is in the wickedness of England : from this premise, as from the existence of Descartes, it is possible to deduce a whole philosophy. From the fact that England is Christian, it follows that Hinduism or Mohammedanism, as the case may be, is the only true religion. From the fact that England is capitalistic and industrial, it follows, according to the temperament of the logician concerned, either that everybody ought to spin with a spinning wheel, or that protective duties ought to be imposed to develop native industrialism and capitalism as the only weapons with which to combat those of the British. From the fact that the British hold India by physical force, it follows that only moral force is admirable. The persecution of nationalist activities in India is just sufficient to make them heroic, and not sufficient to make them futile. In this way the Anglo-Indians save the intelligent youth of India from the blight of cynicism.”

Russell's characterisation of India does not require any refutation, it is so false and stupid. It is to the undying credit of Mahatma Gandhi that he has made the political movement in India, not a crusade of hate, but a struggle to achieve ideal manhood. Apart from the ostensible purpose of the movement, the gaining of *Swarāj*, it is making of us better men, more brave, patient, heroic and fearless. We need not hold any political opinion to appreciate the qualities of mind that our men and women, young and old, thousands and thousands of them, are showing in course of the present struggle. To many

these have been a surprise and a happy augury. The hatred of the British, as Russell thinks, could not manifest such excellence of spirit. Only a noble idealism could fill our fighters with such fearless faith and patience. We know there is still much confusion in the national mind, but we have reasons enough to hope for the ultimate vindication of our eternal ideals.

### SWAMI TRIGUNATITA

Lately the Vedanta Society of San Francisco, U.S.A., observed the birthday of Swami Trigunatita. The Swami, as the readers of *Prabuddha Bharata* may know, was one of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna and for many years in charge of the San Francisco Vedanta Centre. On the occasion of the anniversary, several of his students recounted their experience of the Swami. We are glad to be able to record here, from reports received, a few of the features of the Swami's great character for the edification of our readers.

The Swami was a unique character. He possessed many uncommon traits. He could go without food for days together, if he liked, and when he liked, he could consume ten men's food in one meal. He could sleep at will and remain awake for days and nights without the slightest effort. A disciple said : “When I first saw the Swami Trigunatita in his robe and turban it was across the width of a hall where he was attending a lecture. The light did not favor him and my hasty impression was : ‘What an ugly man !’ Soon after, however, I was to find that this appearance was the effect of an indomitable will combined with lion-like courage rising from a rugged and heroic character. . . Just to be in Swami's presence was to be bathed in an ocean of purity. In his presence doubts and anxieties melted away like snow before the sun. . . . ‘Live like a hermit but work like a horse,’ was one of Swami's favourite mottos.”

Another disciple also, in recounting her experience of the Swami, mentioned her disappointment at his appearance in her first view of him, for as she said, she had expected to see him endowed with the physical characteristics and regal bearing of Swami Vivekananda. But as she came to know him intimately, "the sense of his physical insignificance passed away, for he had the power of making himself seem different in stature at different times." The disciple continued: "Sometimes he seemed to tower over us like a giant, at others he seemed almost Lilliputian. In his spiritual aspects he was equally variable. On occasions he would joke and laugh like a schoolboy, again he would be the sage, as remote as the Himalayas. . . . He never relaxed for a moment the strict rigidity of his monastic rules, was never once affected by the Western love of physical comfort. In this connection a story of him may be told. He was a great sufferer from rheumatism, due, in the students' opinion, to his habit of sleeping on his office floor, instead of in a bed. After much solicitation the Swami consulted a physician, went patiently through all the necessary diagnostic procedures, and when the physician advised him to give over his practice of sleeping on the floor, said: 'I am a *Sannyāsīn*. What have I to do with beds?' Later the physician was heard to remark: 'Well, you cannot help respecting such sincerity, no matter how unwise the attitude it may lead him to take.' What tremendous force lay in such example!"

He was very kind and gentle to his students. But when necessary, he could be stern. To quote the disciple again: "One of the students who found the chairs in the auditorium very uncomfortable, went to him and asked to have the chairs fixed. 'Fix your mind,' he thundered, 'that is where the fault lies, not in the chairs.' He was equally ruthless with our visions and psychic experiences. He would listen gravely, and when we were finished, would say: 'I have put you on the express train for New York with no stop-over privileges.

On your way back you may stop off at Chicago, St. Louis—anywhere you wish. Your chief concern now should be to get to New York. New York is the Truth. The way-stations are the different psychic planes. If you stop off, you will never reach your goal. My train does not stop—you may get off where you please on the return trip.'

"He used to say that common sense was the divine sense, and that religion was only the development of that sense. 'Purify and intensify your common sense,' he would say, 'and you will know the Truth, sooner or later. To develop common sense, we must have strength, mental, moral and spiritual, principle, character. We must fight the world and Nature. We must be independent and help ourselves. If our own strength and will-power are not strong enough, we should seek Divine strength. In seeking Divine strength, we find a different law operating. Then we become dependent—not in a sense of subjugation or crawling humility, but in uplifting ourselves above worldly conditions and from there placing our trust in the Lord.'

"He was the humblest of men. Never did one hear him say 'I'. He was always in the background, busy with the affairs of the Master. On one occasion a student brought to him a picture of the original disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, asking him to indicate every one by name. With his usual painstaking care he numbered every figure in the picture, and at the bottom wrote the number with the corresponding name so that the student might have a permanent record. His own number was 13. Opposite this number he wrote—not Swami Trigunatita—but: 'The servant of all'. And nothing truer was ever written."

The Swami was a very great soul and left an indelible impression on whomsoever he came in contact with. His disciples have cause to congratulate themselves on having known him. To know such souls as the Swami is a special dispensation of Providence.

ASIA ON  
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

We are glad to publish the following appreciation of Swami Vivekananda by the Editor of *Asia*, an excellent monthly of New York, U.S.A. :

Among the many delegates who gathered for the Parliament of Religions opened by Cardinal Gibbons during the World's Fair at Chicago thirty-seven years ago was a young Hindu monk named Vivekananda. Penniless, unknown, without credentials, he became at once the outstanding figure of the Congress. Afterward it was said of him, "He was the first Oriental since the time of Christ who came with a divine message for the people of the West."

Ramakrishna (Vivekananda's Master) was an almost illiterate Brahman priest whose wisdom was drawn solely from the depths of his own being. Vivekananda, on the other hand, possessed a brilliant, university-trained mind. He was a student of science as well as of history and languages. Yet, perceiving that the ancient Hindu outlook embraced a horizon large enough to swallow up all the truths of modern science, he made it his life work to restate and clarify, according to the need of to-day, the accumulated wisdom of the Indian sages. It is significant that though he sternly dissociated all his activities from politics, the upward swing of the Indian Nationalist movement followed the clarion call to his people to shake off their fetters of ignorance and recognize within themselves the well-spring of an unlimited power.

It is men like Ramakrishna and Vivekananda who give the key to understanding the India of to-day. Mahatma Gandhi has just focused the attention of the world on his little parade to the sea to make salt in violation of the Government monopoly. To the West, Mr. Gandhi appears enigmatic and half mad—or else exceedingly astute—preaching strange doctrines of non-violence and spinning-wheels. To the Indian villager,

he is not only understandable but a living ideal. He brings into the new field of politics the old spiritual emphasis. He talks a familiar language, the same language spoken by Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. Of Ramakrishna, Gandhi himself has written, "In this age of scepticism Ramakrishna presents an example of a bright and living faith which gives solace to thousands of men and women who would otherwise have remained without spiritual light. Ramakrishna's life was an object-lesson in *Ahimsa* (non-injury)."

Vivekananda's purpose in visiting the West was twofold. He came to seek material help for India in her present state of want, and to offer in exchange the spiritual wisdom of India, garnered through thousands of years of searching. "Whenever this world of ours—on account of growth, on account of added circumstances—requires a new adjustment, a wave of power comes, and, as man is acting on two planes the spiritual and the material, waves of adjustment come on both planes," he maintained. A century or two of emphasis on science in the West had developed great material prosperity for the people of the West. But Vivekananda believed that the prosperity of half the world cannot long remain stable while the other half lives at a starvation-level. He imagined that Americans, if only they knew of the starving millions in India, would gladly give of their surplus. But he did not come as a beggar. The one-sided emphasis on materialism, he saw, was resulting in a growing, not a diminishing, dependence on matter, making the West forgetful that "Man shall not live by bread alone." It is always from Asia that this reminder has come of the reality of spirit. Vivekananda's force of conviction was dynamic.

Indian thought, it is true, was not altogether new at the time of Vivekananda's first visit to America, but it was less than a short hundred years since a first translation had appeared in Europe—in Latin—of a tiny portion of the sacred scriptures of India. This

Latin version of some of the *Upanisads* was read and commented upon by Schopenhauer, who at once prophesied that the influence of Sanskrit literature was destined to penetrate the thought of Europe not less deeply than the classical revival affected it in the fifteenth century.

Indeed, the impetus for a study of Sanskrit was already launched, and by the middle of the nineteenth century repercussions had been felt in the United States. As Romain Rolland points out, Emerson, Thoreau and Whitman were all captivated by the immensity of the Indian perspective—Emerson and Thoreau directly, Whitman indirectly. Emerson's peculiarly sensitive response to Indian philosophy, as he gathered it from the fragmentary translations of Sanskrit literature then available, made him Emerson. But when Vivekananda came toward the close of the century, he spoke with the direct personal note. Had Emerson met him, he would have been the first to acknowledge the greatness of both

the man and his message.

To his western audiences Vivekananda did not disseminate any sectarian Hindu belief—any more than to his Indian ones—but the essence of religion itself. He asked men to recognize that the various religions are only “different visions of the same Truth from different standpoints.” He laid down no creed, set up no particular God. In his first address at Chicago he quoted a passage he had learned to recite in his earliest childhood: “As the different streams, having their sources in different places all mingle their water in the sea, so, O Lord, the different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee.”

His gospel—as good for to-day as yesterday and for tomorrow as to-day—outlines the definite methods and technique, based on universal religious experience, by which men, through their chosen paths, can more swiftly attain the goal—whether through work, devotion, mysticism or philosophy.

## REVIEW

CHRISTIANITY AND THE INDIAN RELIGION OF GRACE. By Rudolf Otto. *The Christian Literature Society for India, Madras.* 59 pp. Price 8 as.

The book is a collection of four short lectures delivered by the author at the University of Upsala in Sweden on the subject of the relation of the South Indian religion of Bhakti to Christianity. The Bhakti religion of Ramanuja is considered by the author as ‘the most serious rival with which it is possible for Christianity to enter into conflict’, as there are striking similarities between the two as regards the idea of salvation, which is the core of a religious faith. “In spite of all the similarities, the spirit of Christianity and of the Bhakti religion remains different,” observes the author. He mentions two fundamental points of difference with regard to (1) the idea of the kingdom of God and (2) the doctrine of salvation by grace. The author concludes: “This implies that in spite of the greatest external similarities between

Bhakti religion and Christianity, the former cannot be a lower form, from which it is possible to reach a higher form by way of a gradual transition.”

That there is essential difference between the Christian dogmatics and the Bhakti cult of Ramanuja we also recognise. But we are not going to point out the dissimilarities to the advantage of the one or the other. We shall only refer to the author's misrepresentation of Indian doctrines of *lila* and grace while showing the contrast. The learned professor remarks: “India does not know of a true and real *telos* of this world. It rolls continually on and on, without meaning or aim. Though it is a creation of God, it is at the same time His eternal *lila*, a sport of God.”

But *lila* does not indicate that there is no plan and purpose in the universe. It simply means that God has no motive in creation, no unfulfilled desire to fulfil. There is a divine urge behind the universe towards a definite goal. But though there

is will, there is no effort. *Lila* signifies that the entire work of creation is characterised by the ease, the spontaneity and the joyousness of sport. An idea of mysteriousness is also implied in *lila*. In Ramanuja's system, as in all other Vedantic religions, the extracosmic will and the external teleology have been replaced by the immanence of Divine spirit shaping the universe from within and guiding all created beings in a continuous march towards eternal bliss.

With regard to the second point of difference the author states: "Isvara is the God who delivers from the unblessedness of *Samskara* without our own merit and co-operation, but does not deliver from the agony of sin. Isvara is the God of the earth-bound, but not the God of the conscience, nor the saviour from *terrores conscientiae*, not the atoner and redeemer from the curse of guilt." We can only say that this is a gross misconception of the Indian doctrine of grace and spiritual ideal.

**IMPRISONMENT.** By Lieut-Colonel F. A. Barker, M.A., M.D., B.C., O.B.E., I.M.S. *The Christian Literature Society for India.* XI+191 pp. Price Re. 1-8 as.

Jail life of the prisoners should be a reformatory and not a punitive period—that is the advanced idea with regard to imprisonment. In England also jail life was horrible sometime back. But the untiring activities of persons like John Howard and others for ameliorating the wretched condition of the prisoners have gone a great way to reform the English prisons. In India the popular idea is that in jails the criminally inclined become confirmed criminals, and the half savage who enter there return complete brutes, and the treatment also that is meted out to the prisoners does hardly indicate that they are recognised as human beings. Not being acquainted with the actual jail administration we cannot vouch for the truth of the above. But 'experiences of jail life' that are published from time to time by many political prisoners beginning with Mahatma Gandhi and others give but a gloomy idea of life within the prison bars. In India everything goes at a snail's pace and the reform of our jail administration is long overdue. Lieut-Colonel Barker, Inspector-General of Prisons, Punjab, has brought out the present volume and gives in his non-official capacity an account of Indian jails and of prevailing practice in

regard to imprisonment. In these pages he depicts the prison system in India side by side with those obtaining in England and the Continent and shows how the prison system in this country requires many improvements. The suggestions that he offers are judicious and well-intentioned. But external reforms will be of no avail, unless all connected with the jail administration can be made to feel that they are "but as trustees of erring individuals, each of whom has a life to save and character to build up." We wish that the book sets athinking both official and non-official minds as to how reform can be effected of those condemned unfortunates who if proper care is taken of them, may be turned into good citizens, at least some of them.

**KRISHNA: A STUDY IN THE THEORY OF AVATARS.** By Bhagavan Das. *Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras.* 300 pp. Price bound Rs. 2-12 as.

The book is a revised and enlarged version of a paper read by the author on Krishna's life on a birthday celebration of Sri Krishna in 1919. It has attained its present form in the course of three editions. In the first few pages the author tries to explain the theory of *Avatāra* propounded by the *Purāṇas* in the light of modern history. The author's account of Sri Krishna is based mainly on the *Bhāgavata* and the *Mahābhārata*. References have also been made to other *Purāṇas*. The *Purāṇas* contain in the author's view much historical, scientific and philosophical truths in a concrete form suited to popular understanding. An all-sided character like Krishna is rarely to be found in history ancient or modern. He was great in action, great in emotion, great in knowledge. The author describes these three aspects of Krishna's personality with reference to the incidents of his life.

The author does not find anything seriously wrong in the youthful loves of Sri Krishna with the milkmaids of Vraja. As mentioned in the *Bhāgavata*, he was only eleven when he left Brindaban for Mathura. His dancings and flirtings are "rather only a precocious manifestation, even in early boyhood, of another aspect of Krishna's richly artistic and vital nature." The various superphysical and mystical deeds of Krishna, though much magnified through sentimental devotion, belong to him as a superman.

As a matter of fact, the accounts of Sri Krishna's deeds have been much modified and exaggerated in course of ages, but his teachings remain to us in direct form. The author particularly mentions the *Bhagavat Gītā* and the *Anugītā*, but does not seem to take any notice of the *Uddhavagītā*. His estimate of the *Gītā* may be summed up in his own words: "It is a text-book of Spiritual Rationalism, in the first degree, and as natural issue therefrom, of Rational Practicalism, in the second degree, no doubt. But it is also a manual of Practical Devotionalism in the third degree." The *Gītā* bases the caste-system not on 'heredity' but on 'spontaneous variation'. The author mentions certain *slokas* of the *Bhāgavata* to show how caste was formerly readjusted according to *guna* and *karma*.

The author's knowledge of science, history, religion and philosophy has found free play in the treatment of the subject. This makes the book more scholastic than impressive. It also contains traces of the author's theosophical views. The printing and the get-up are good.

**HYMNS OF THE ALVARS.** By J. S. M. Hooper, M.A. (Oxon). *The Association Press*, 5, Russell Street, Calcutta. XII+94 pp. Price paper Re. 1-4 as.

'Alvars' is a general word referring to the Tamil saints of the Vaisnava School. The devotional out-pourings of the hearts of the Alvars is to be found in many of their songs and hymns with which the religious life of the South is closely interwoven. As all these songs and hymns are in Tamil, they are in consequence a sealed book to all non-Tamilians who can no less enjoy and profit by them. The present author translating some of the representative hymns into English has made them accessible for a wider circle of readers, and laid many under a debt to him. For some of the hymns given in the book are exquisitely beautiful and quite likely to inspire one with devotional feelings.

In the general introduction the author has given short sketches of the lives of the Alvars he has quoted, and attempted to supply such information as will help a non-Indian in the correct understanding of the book. In this, though we find his great sympathetic attitude and power of appreciation, the author has sometimes betrayed his

inability to rightly understand the religious life of India. As for instance, in one place he says: "but aiming at the same end of giddy exhilaration is the practice of repeating the thousand names of Vishnu, and so by a kind of self-hypnotism losing oneself in the rapture." The Christian author has evidently gone here beyond his depth.

On the whole the book has been a valuable addition to the volumes already published in the Heritage of India series.

**THE BUDDHA'S PATH OF VIRTUE.** By F. L. Woodward, M.A. *The Theosophical Publishing House*, Adyar, Madras. XXIV+105 pp. Price not mentioned.

This is a versified translation of the *Dhammapada*, an important canonical work of the Buddhists. The *Dhammapada* forms a part of one of the *Ti-pitaka*, namely *Suttapitaka* and is believed to contain the teachings which Tathagata himself preached for 45 years while wandering from place to place with a long train of followers in the mid-Ganges valley and sub-Himalayan tracts. As such the book is of much interest to all followers of the Lord, and what the Bible is to the Christians, the *Gita* to the Hindus, the *Dhammapada* is to the Buddhists. Every Bhikshu is expected to know the *Dhammapada* by heart, and there was a time when its verses reverberated in the Buddhist monasteries throughout the length and breadth of the country. As the book contains teachings which are universally applicable and true of all times and races, it is bound to appeal not only to the Buddhists, but to seekers of truth belonging to all faiths.

The *Dhammapada* was introduced to Europe by Dr. Fausboll through a Latin translation in 1855 A.D. and ever since the book has been translated into various European languages. There have been English translations too, one of them being that of Prof. Max Müller incorporated in the Sacred Books of the East series. Yet the present nice little handy volume will have an attraction of its own.

The original Pali of the *Dhammapada* is very lucid, graceful and appealing. Some of these qualities have not been altogether lost in the present translation by the able author. On the whole, we were much pleased to go through the book and trust it will be much in demand.

# MAYAVATI CHARITABLE DISPENSARY

## REPORT FOR 1929

In submitting the report of the above institution for the year 1929 we want at the outset to record our sincere gratitude to our kind-hearted donors and subscribers. The Dispensary which is under the charge of a monastic member of the Advaita Ashrama, is indeed doing great service to the hill people. With the passing of time the institution is proving of increasingly greater service to them. This can be seen from the number of patients who received medical help year after year. Patients come to the Dispensary from far and near, and

Hindus, Mohammedans, Christians, men, women, children, all receive due attention, help and service.

The total number of patients relieved during the year at the Outdoor Dispensary was 7,298, of which 5,813 were new cases and 1,485 repeated cases. Of these new cases 3,256 were men, 1,195 women and 1,862 children. In the Indoor Hospital the total number treated was 343 as against 183 in the previous year. Of this number 230 were discharged cured, 109 relieved or left the Hospital and 4 died.

### STATEMENT OF DISEASES

(INDOOR INCLUDED)

Dysentery	...	...	250	Ulcer	...	...	10
Fever	...	...	78	Burning	...	...	20
M. Fever	...	...	425	Injury	...	...	60
Rheumatic Fever	...	...	15	M. Diseases	...	...	525
Debility	...	...	200	F. Diseases	...	...	945
Headache	...	...	45	Worms	...	...	220
Eye Diseases	...	...	1,522	Gout	...	...	65
Ear Diseases	...	...	150	Lumbago	...	...	70
Paralysis	...	...	20	Toothache	...	...	200
Influenza	...	...	30	Operation	...	...	40
Bronchitis	...	...	100	Ozeona	...	...	25
Pneumonia	...	...	20	Phthisis	...	...	25
Asthma	...	...	24	Leprosy	...	...	5
Cough	...	...	180	Dyspepsia	...	...	35
H. Cough	...	...	2	Boil	...	...	40
Colic	...	...	40	Pain Local	...	...	40
Piles	...	...	25	Tumour	...	...	20
Spleen	...	...	15	Diarrhoea	...	...	455
Dropsy	...	...	50				
Skin Diseases	...	...	165				
				TOTAL	...	...	6,156

### SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS FOR 1929

RECEIPTS				EXPENDITURE			
		Rs.	A. P.			Rs.	A. P.
Last Year's Balance	...	2,475	6 10	Medicines and Diet	...	671	11 9
Donations and Subscriptions	...	476	8 3	Doctor's Maintenance and Travelling	...	360	0 0
Interest	...	94	8 0	Instruments and Equipments	...	228	1 9
				Lighting and Establishment	...	96	12 0
				Printing Reports and Postage	...	19	0 0
TOTAL	...	3,046	7 1	TOTAL	...	1,375	9 6
				BALANCE	...	1,670	18 7

The following chart gives an idea of the progress of the Dispensary and the Hospital during the last 3 years :

	At the Outdoor Dispensary	At the Indoor Hospital
Cases treated in—		
1927	1,509	74
1928	8,889	183
1929	7,298	343

The figures of the Indoor Hospital show an ever-increasing demand on the Dispensary. In 1927 it was 74 and in 1928 it was 183 and this year 343. We have at present two rooms to accommodate 4 patients in the Indoor Hospital, a number too small to meet the increasing demand. We are, therefore, contemplating the construction of a new ward of 8 beds with all accessories, which means an expenditure of at least Rs. 15,000/-, an amount which the Dispensary cannot afford at present. We, therefore, appeal to our kind-hearted

countrymen to come forward and help us with liberal contributions.

We also appeal to the generous public for a Permanent Fund for the maintenance of this Dispensary and its Indoor Hospital of 12 beds. An endowment of Rs. 1,500/- will meet the cost of maintaining one bed.

Donors desirous of perpetuating the memory of their departed friends or relatives may do so through this humanitarian work by bearing the cost of the above-mentioned building or a part thereof or by contributing towards the Permanent Fund for the maintenance of the Dispensary.

All contributions, however small, either for the building or the upkeep of the Dispensary, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the undersigned.

(Sd.) SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA  
President, Advaita Ashrama,  
P.O. Mayavati, Dt. Almora, U.P.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### ACTIVITIES OF SWAMI AKHILANANDA IN U.S.A.

A correspondent writes :

The Vedanta Society of Providence, Rhode Island, U.S.A., opened its second season to the public with a service on September 4th, 1929. A special musical programme was given by students and friends. It was very successful and people showed their interest for the work done here by Swami Akhilananda.

In November a dinner party was given by friends and devotees at the Narragansett Hotel. Many attended and a wonderful atmosphere was created amongst the devotees. Various topics were discussed during the evening. A letter from Revered Swami Shivananda to a friend was read to all. Other entertainment was given by friends.

Swami's work here is spreading rapidly to some of the churches. A lecture on the *Scientific Basis of Religion* was given at Bell Street Church in November. A Baptist Church invited him to lecture on *Hinduism* in January, 1930.

Christmas was celebrated as usual with special services, music and refreshments. The picture of Christ was beautifully decorated with flowers and evergreens. A tastefully decorated Christmas tree, many

poinsettias and other plants completed the season's festivity.

The birthday of Swami Vivekananda was enthusiastically celebrated with special services and music. A party was given in reverence and memory of Swamiji. A Hindu menu was cooked by Swami for the students, which was appreciated by all. Rev. F. Wilmot, religious editor of the *Providence Journal*, spoke on the Message of Swami Vivekananda. Swami's subject was the *Renaissance of Swami Vivekananda*.

Sri Ramakrishna's birthday was celebrated for two days and eagerly attended. March 2nd, Sunday morning, Swami spoke on the *Life and Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna*. In the evening Rev. F. Wilmot and Swami spoke on *Universal Religion*. The altar was gorgeously decorated with cut flowers, lights and incense. Many palms and other plants covered the platform. A picture of Him was draped with flowers.

A library was opened to all who wish to read and study Vedanta. The room is comfortably furnished with suitable furniture and books. Six large pictures of great teachers were donated by an artist and friend of the Centre. On Monday evening a birthday Indo-American dinner was enjoyed at the Dreyfus Hotel. Swami Bodhananda of New York was also present.



The two Swamis, Rev. Wilmot and two other prominent Providence businessmen gave brief talks during the evening.

Swami gave many interesting interviews to the representatives of the newspapers

during this season. Classes on the *Gita* and *Upanishads* are given on Tuesdays and Fridays. Regular services are held on Sundays. Many private talks are enjoyed by devotees and friends.

### DACCA RIOT RELIEF

We have received the following appeal from the Secy., R. K. Mission :

The public is undoubtedly aware of the atrocities recently committed by ruffians at and round about the town of Dacca. Along with other forms of lawlessness the looting of houses and shops played a most diabolical part. This it is which is responsible for the greatest amount of lasting misery to hundreds of families both in the town and in the villages, the victims in most cases being Hindus. The condition of Rohitpur, a village a few miles from Dacca, has been particularly distressing. Of 480 Hindu families living there, 191 had their houses completely sacked, and in the local bazar the 40 shops that belonged to the Hindus suffered the same fate. The following lines from our workers, sent on inspection, will give the reader an idea of the extent of the devastation caused :

“The reports you have heard about Rohitpur are nothing in comparison with the actual state of things. One has to see it with one’s own eyes to form a true idea. It is over a month since the atrocities took place, but even now the condition of the residents is such as to paralyse one’s heart. The villagers are in the grip of extreme destitution. Not only have they no food, but they have also been despoiled of every kind of utensils, so that even if food-stuffs are produced, cooking is impossible. Not a piece of furniture, no earthenware, not even a broom-stick, has been left. Many have only the cloth they are wearing as their sole possession.”

Not only are these people suffering, but others also—small traders—who have been thrown out of work owing to the entire dislocation of trade.

The relief that has hitherto been given them by the local bodies is all too insufficient for the purpose. Our workers, seeing the imperative necessity of relief, have opened a relief centre at Rohitpur, from which on the 5th instant we distributed 25 mds. 22 srs. of rice to 341 recipients belonging to 118 families, and on the 12th instant 35 mds. of rice to 400 recipients belonging to 152 families. About a maund of rice was also distributed as temporary help during these two weeks.

In view of the fact that the small traders must be set on their feet to earn a living, we are thinking of giving them some pecuniary help for this purpose. The supply of cloth and utensils is also a crying necessity, which we are trying to meet. We are thankful to Messrs. Jeewanlal, Ltd., of Calcutta for the kind gift of slightly damaged aluminium utensils worth Rs. 250/- for the sufferers.

We have started the work with the balance of our Provident Fund which is fast diminishing, and must be immediately replenished if the work is to continue. We earnestly appeal to all sympathetic hearts to help us with adequate funds without the least delay. Contributions will be thankfully received and acknowledged at the following addresses : (1) The President, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, Dt. Howrah. (2) The Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 182A, Mukhtarām Babu Street, Calcutta. (3) The Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1 Mukerji Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta.





Sister Christine

# Prabuddha Bharata

SEPTEMBER, 1930

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Number 9

“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

## DISCOURSES ON JNANA YOGA

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Expression is necessarily degeneration, because spirit can only be expressed by the “letter”, and as St. Paul said, “the letter killeth”. Life cannot be in the “letter” which is only a reflection. Yet, principle must be clothed in matter to be “known”. We lose sight of the real in the covering and come to consider that as the Real, instead of as the symbol. This is an almost universal mistake. Every great Teacher knows this and tries to guard against it, but humanity in general is prone to worship the *seen* rather than the unseen. This is why a succession of prophets have come to the world, to point again to the principle behind the personality and to give it a new covering suited to the times. Truth remains ever unchanged, but it can only be presented in a “form”, so from time to time a new “form”, or expression is given to Truth, as the progress of mankind makes them ready to receive it. When we free ourselves from name and form, especially when we no longer need a body of any kind, good or bad, coarse or fine, then only do we escape from

bondage. “Eternal progression” would be eternal bondage. We must get beyond all differentiation and reach eternal “sameness” or homogeneity or Brahman. The Atman is the unity of all personalities and is unchangeable, is the “One without a second”. It is not life but it is coined into life. It is beyond life and death and good and bad. It is the Absolute Unity. Dare to seek Truth even through hell. Freedom can never be true of name and form, of the related. No form can say : “I am free as a form.” Not until all idea of form is lost, does freedom come. If our freedom hurts others, we are not free there. We *must not* hurt others. While *real* perception is only one, *relative* perceptions must be many. The fountain of all knowledge is in every one of us, in the ant as in the highest angel. Real religion is one, all quarrel is with the forms, the symbols, the “illustrations.” The millennium exists already, for those who find it. The truth is, we have lost *ourselves* and think the *world* to be lost. “Fool ! Hearest not thou ? In thine own heart, day and night, is singing

that Eternal Music—Satchidānandam, Sohham, Sohham (Existence, Knowledge and Bliss, I am He, I am He)!"

To try to think without a phantasm is to try to make the impossible possible. Each thought has two parts—the thinking and the word, and we must have both. Neither idealists nor materialists are able to explain the world; to do that, we must take both idea and expression. All knowledge is of the reflected as we can only see our own faces reflected in a mirror. So, no one can know his Self or Brahman; but each is that Self and must see it reflected in order to make it an object of knowledge. This seeing the illustrations of the unseen Principle is what leads to idolatry—so-called. The range of idols is wider than is usually supposed. They range from wood and stone to great personalities as Jesus or Buddha. The introduction of idols into India was the result of Buddha's constantly inveighing against Personal God. The Vedas knew them not, but the reaction against the loss of God as Creator and Friend led to making idols of the great teachers, and Buddha himself became an idol and is worshipped as such by millions of people. Violent attempts at reform always end in retarding true reform. To worship is inherent in every man's nature; only the highest philosophy can rise to pure abstraction. So man will ever personify his God, in order to worship Him. This is very good, as long as the symbol, be it what it may, is worshipped as a symbol of the Divinity behind and not in and for itself. Above all, we need to free ourselves from the superstition of believing because "it is in the books." To try to make everything, science, religion, philosophy, all conform to what *any* book says, is a most horrible tyranny. Book-worship is the worst form of idolatry. There was once a stag, proud and free, and he talked in a lordly fashion to his son: "Look at me, see my powerful horns! With one blow I can kill a man; it is a fine thing to be a stag!" Just then

the sound of the huntsman's bugle was heard in the distance and the stag precipitately fled, followed by his wondering child. When they had reached a place of safety, he enquired: "Why do you fly before man, O my father, when you are so strong and brave?" The stag answered: "My child, I know I am strong and powerful, but when I hear that sound, something seizes me and makes me flee whether I will or no." So with us. We hear the "bugle sound" of the laws laid down in the books, habit and old superstitions lay hold of us, and before we know it we are fast bound and forget our real nature which is freedom.

Knowledge exists eternally. The man who discovers a spiritual truth is what we call "inspired", and what he brings to the world is revelation. But revelation too is eternal and is not to be crystallised as final and then blindly followed. Revelation may come to any man who has fitted himself to receive it. Perfect purity is the most essential thing, for only the "pure in heart shall see God." Man is the highest being that exists and this is the greatest world, for here can man realize freedom. The highest concept we can have of God is man. Every attribute we give Him belongs also to man, only in a less degree. When we rise higher and want to get out of this concept of God, we have to get out of the body, out of mind and imagination, and leave this world out of sight. When we rise to be the Absolute, we are no longer in the world; all is Subject, without object. Man is the apex of the only "world" we can ever know. Those who have attained "sameness," or perfection, are said to be "living in God". All hatred is "killing the self by the self"; therefore, love is the law of life. To rise to this is to be perfect, but the more "perfect" we are, the less work can we do. The Sāttvika *see* and know that all this world is mere child's play and do not trouble themselves for that. We are not much disturbed when we see two puppies fighting and biting each other.

We know it is not a serious matter. The perfect one knows that this world is Mâyâ. Life is called Samsâra—it is the result of the conflicting forces acting upon us. Materialism says: “The voice of freedom is a delusion.” Idealism says: “The voice that tells of bondage is but a dream.” Vedânta

says: “We are *free* and *not free* at the same time.” That means that we are never free on the earthly plane, but ever free on the spiritual side. The Self is beyond freedom and bondage both. We are Brahman, we are immortal knowledge beyond the senses, we are bliss absolute.

(Concluded)

## AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

FLORENCE, ITALY,

20th December, 1896.

As you see by this I am on my way. Before leaving London I got your letter and the pamphlet. Take no notice of M.'s madness. He surely has gone crazy with jealousy. Such foul language as he has used, would only make people laugh at him in any civilized country. He has defeated his purpose by the use of such vulgar words.

At the same time we ought not to allow H. or anyone else to go and fight X's and others in our name. . . . We have no quarrel with any sect, and if anybody provokes quarrel, he is doing it on his own responsibility. Quarrelling with and abusing each other are our national traits. Lazy, useless, vulgar, jealous, cowardly and quarrelsome, this is what we Bengalees are. Anyone who wants to be my friend, must give up *these*. . . .

M. writes that the sayings of Sri Ramakrishna, published in *The Brahma-vadin*, are not genuine, does he? In that case ask Suresh Dutt and Ram Babu to give him the lie in *The Indian Mirror*. As I did not know anything about the collection of the sayings, I cannot say anything. . . .

## SISTER CHRISTINE

By BOSHI SEN

Sister Christine, best beloved of Swami Vivekananda's Western disciples, almost the very first to understand and live the message preached in America, gave up her body in the early morning of March 27, 1980, at the home of her friend, Mrs. Alice Fuller LeRoy in New York City. The best that New York could offer in the way of medical help and care Mrs. LeRoy's loving concern provided. Her final illness lasted only seven days. For the last twenty-four

hours she did not speak, but was conscious; she would open her eyes and look steadily beyond whenever her favourite Sanskrit *slokas* were chanted. Though years of previous illness had written their marks on her thin, chiselled face, when the final release came, her expression changed instantly. Her face was aglow, she looked years younger, and ineffable peace radiated from her; the anguish and sorrow of those surrounding her, she tried to

appease with her blissful parting smile. It must have been the final realisation of what she had experienced earlier, at a time when she wrote :

"There are no words in any language to describe its quality. For it has no human correspondence. It has no relation to anything in *Mâyâ*. There was stillness, utter stillness. Is this peace? The whirl and turmoil of life was stilled for the first time. There was no emotion, no hope, no fear, no joy, no sorrow, no, no, *neti, neti*. Never have I felt so soothed. I fell asleep peacefully."

Sister Christine was born of German parentage, in Nuremberg, August 17, 1866. Her father, Frederick Greenstidel, moved to the United States when she was only three years old, and the family settled in Detroit. She had a very happy childhood. Her father, a noble, free-thinking German scholar, was the hero of her worship and the object of her adoration. But he lacked business acumen and as a result lost all his savings and inheritance. At the age of seventeen, Sister Christine, faced with the responsibility of being the sole provider for her mother and five younger sisters, accepted the position of teacher in the Detroit Public Schools. From this time on to the very end, life demanded of her heroic struggles and noble self-effacement.

In early youth she outgrew her passionate devotion to the church doctrines and became one of the first Christian Scientists of Detroit. But nothing satisfied the yearning of her soul, till one day, as she writes in her unpublished memoirs, "It happened. The stupendous thing for which we have been waiting—that which dispels the deadly monotony, which turns the whole of life into a new channel, which eventually takes one to a far-away country, which sets one among strange people, to whom, from the very first, we feel a strange kinship. Wonderful people who know what they are waiting for, who know the purpose of life."

On February 24, 1894, she, with her friend, Mrs. Mary C. Funke, went rather unwillingly to a lecture of one "Vive Kananda, a monk from India." "Surely never in our countless incarnations had we taken a step so momentous! For before we had listened five minutes we knew that we had found the touchstone for which we have been searching. In one breath, we exclaimed, 'If we had missed this—!' It was the mind that made the first great appeal, that amazing mind! What can one say that will give even a faint idea of its majesty, its glory, its splendour! Yet marvellous as the ideas were, and wonderful as that intangible something that emanated from the mind, it was all strangely familiar. I found myself saying, 'I have known that *mind* before.' For six weeks he remained in Detroit. We missed no occasion of hearing him. We knew we had found our Teacher. The word *Guru* we did not know then. Nor did we meet him personally, but what matter? It would take years to assimilate what we had already learned. And then the Master would somehow, somewhere, teach us again!"

But it happened earlier than they expected. It was on July 6, 1895, hearing that Swami Vivekananda was spending the summer at Thousand Island Park, that Sister Christine, with her friend, Mrs. Funke, started out uninvited to seek him and to learn more of his wonderful teachings. About these two, Swamiji used to say: "The disciples who travelled hundreds of miles to find me—they came in the night and in the rain!" When they met, Sister Christine greeted him with the simple declaration: "We have come, just as we would go to Jesus if he were still on earth and ask him to teach us." Swamiji's gentle reply was: "If only I possessed the power of the Christ to set you free now!"

The day after the arrival, Swamiji, with Sister Christine's permission, read her life. When he asked: "May I read all?", she replied: "Yes, of course." "Brave girl!" he exclaimed. He told

her then that she had only three veils left and that her third eye would open in this life. The next day Swamiji initiated her. Referring to those days she once said : "I was a fool not to have asked him any questions. Every one did that and tried to *get* something from him. I used to feel so sorry for him. Now I would like to ask him a few questions." To my protest, "No, mother, you wouldn't," she at once replied : "Perhaps you are right. Near that radiance all doubts disappeared. After the first few sentences of his lectures it always used to be more of realising than listening."

It was at Thousand Island Park, and many a time later on, that Swamiji discussed with her in detail his ideas of women's work in India. He used to think aloud his hopes, his doubts and the possible solution. It was not until her mother died and her sisters were ready to care for themselves that she could lay down the duties to her family to take up her work in India. Early in April, 1902, she reached Calcutta. She saw Swamiji only a few times. He would not let her remain in Calcutta during the hot season but sent her to Mayavati. On July 4, Swamiji entered *Mahā-samādhi*. This was a tremendous blow to Sister Christine. She decided to remain in India, however, to start the work entrusted to her by her *Guru*. She had no funds beyond a very small personal allowance from Mrs. Ole Bull. With the active co-operation of Swami Saradananda, she started her first one-roomed Vivekananda School. "In the autumn of 1903," writes her colleague and fellow-disciple, Sister Nivedita, "the whole work for Indian women was taken up and organised by Sister Christine, and to her and her faithfulness and initiative alone, it owes all its success up to the present (1910)." The institution grew and blossomed and fulfilled its purpose to educate a group of Hindu women to face this transitional period, to make them economically independent, and inspire them to devote themselves to the cause of women's education.

In 17 Bosepara Lane, Calcutta, the Sisters lived the life of the people. They were regarded as one of themselves by even the most orthodox section of the Hindu community. Besides the whole Ramakrishna Order, they had many devoted friends. The "House of the Sisters" in the Lane was a place of pilgrimage to many of India's distinguished sons and daughters : Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Rabindra Nath Tagore, Nilratan Sircar, Jagadis Chunder and Lady Bose, Sarojini Naidu and others. It was Lady Bose's generous hospitality which mitigated some of the austerities of these Sisters.

Twelve years of extreme hardship ruined Sister Christine's health. Recovering from her serious illness, she came to America in 1914 to visit her family and was caught in the upheaval of the World War, which prevented her return to India for nearly ten years. This proved a great blessing to the devoted group of students who gathered round her in Detroit. She lectured on India and the Vedanta Philosophy. Her lectures were always free, and she showed that the life of a *Sannyāsini* is possible even in a city like Detroit, when one has the will and the needed faith. She gave out her best, never diluted the glorious message of Vedanta. Of these lectures Mrs. Elizabeth King writes : "Her faultless diction, her exquisitely modulated voice, her appearance as of a priestess from some ancient temple, made listening an endless joy. Except in her stereoptican lectures in which she taught us to know and to love India, she had only one theme,—best expressed by Sri Krishna in the *Gita* : 'By Me all this world is pervaded in My manifested aspect. Having manifested this entire universe with one fragment of My glory, I remain,'—but given with such wealth of anecdotes and variety of aspects that you found yourself rooted and immovably fixed in that knowledge."

She returned to India in January, 1924, but her old home at 17 Bosepara Lane had literally collapsed and her





India was hard, and so hard were those first years in India! None of the Western disciples who have come to India, has had to face what she did. Yet when one felt sorry for her, she would say: "Would I have had it different? No, a thousand times no. It is seldom that Vivekananda comes to this earth. If I am to be born again, gladly will I endure a thousand times the hardships of this life for the privilege that has been mine." One felt that the strength of all the hardships had entered into her, for hers was the strength radiant, and not explosive. The stress and storm of life made her indomitable. Her outpouring tenderness and sympathy for the deprived and the defeated generally masked that will of hers, of which she wrote to me:

"I meditate upon my experiences and a beautiful thing happens. It seems as if a bud which has been tightly closed and hard, opens petal by petal, gracious-

ly turning them to the sun. Oh, the slow, the beautiful, gracious movement! A great serenity and peace comes over me. As the petals unfold, I see layer after layer of the mind unfolding. I see, I see! Life after life! The long endless series. So long, so sorrow-laden. Never having forgotten the innate omnipotence, how I tried to mould my life—life after life—to my will! The mistakes, the suffering, the heart-break through long years! Age after age. Then in this life my will had become an occult will. It had mighty power. Sometimes I felt that I could move the stars out of their courses. I almost felt that I dared to say to Yama: 'Thus far shalt thou go and no further!' I overcame insurmountable obstacles. It was this will that brought me to India. It was this will that kept me in the body when it seemed humanly impossible. And now I surrender it. The Divine Will now. 'Not my will but Thine be done!'"

## SOME FUNDAMENTALS OF HINDUISM—I

BY THE EDITOR

### I

Hinduism is a peculiar phenomenon among the religions of the world. All other religions have a definiteness about them. If one wants to understand their principles or the peculiarities that demarcate them from one another, one can easily do so. Not so about Hinduism. It is more true to say of it that it includes everything. We can predicate anything about it. Where its limits lie it is very difficult to say. It seems so loose and amorphous. But is it really so? One thing we must note. Though Hinduism never gives its own definition, it has yet a definite entity. Other religions feel that it has a fully pronounced individuality. Aggressors have been often misled to think that they can easily invade its domains and conquer them. Very soon they have been disillusioned. There is a tremendous resistance from somewhere. That

which appears to be exposed and unprotected, is really very well guarded by invisible powers. What are the fundamentals of Hinduism, then, which make it so invulnerable? What is the structure of its being, that gives it such a well-developed and immortal individuality?

It can be correctly said that not till the present age has Hinduism thought of itself as a religion among other religions. Our religion had no name. The name 'Hinduism' is not its own. It is an appellation given to it by foreigners. We know only *Dharma*, Religion, *Sanātana Dharma*, Eternal Religion. But in this age of the commingling of nations and of intense and elaborate organisation, it has become necessary for Hinduism to conceive itself as an individual. More than foreigners, Hindus themselves need to feel the specialities of their religion, to understand its ways and ideals, to

visualise it at least in outline and to conceive its aim and purpose. This is necessary not only to regain self-assurance, but also to fulfil the national and international functions for which Hinduism lives. In the following pages we shall attempt to draw such an outline.

## II

It is characteristic of Hindu thought that every stage of its evolution has been marked by a conflict between *Jñāna* and *Karma* and their subsequent reconciliation. The scheme of life formulated by Hinduism is based on a consideration of the *totality* of life and experience, without any aspect being left out. *Jñāna* and *Karma* represent the two hemispheres of life's rounded whole. Whereas *Karma* stands for the manifold experience and efforts at attaining the objects of varied desires, *Jñāna* stands for the complete denial of life, activity and desire. In the one, we view life and reality as through a haze,—they constantly change and elude the firm grasp of our mind. In the other, we stand face to face with the Real shining in its pristine effulgence and divested of all illusive investments, and know ourselves as one with it. *Jñāna* and *Karma* thus stand for the two halves of existence, and neither can be ignored in any scheme for the fulfilment and realisation of life, especially in its collective aspect. The problem in every age of Hindu history has, therefore, been how to reconcile them, how to conceive and guide the life of *Karma* in such a way as to lead to the supreme realisation, so that a most comprehensive and synthetic view of life and experience can be arrived at.

From the ancient *Vedic* age down to the present day, this problem has re-cruded periodically in new forms, impelled by the changing circumstances of the evolving time. In the *Vedic* age, the conflict was between sacrificial rites and spiritual wisdom, the *Atma-vidyā* of the *Upanishads*. The problem of the *Rishis* was how to reconcile them. The

traces of the conflict and its solution are found scattered all over the *Upanishads*. We see therein how the *Vedic* gods are being idealised into the supreme *Brahman* and the *Vedic* ceremonies into meditations preliminary to the realisation of *Brahman*. In the age of Krishna, of the *Mahābhārata*, we find the conflict reappearing in a slightly modified form. Here the attempt is to reconcile not merely *Vedic* rituals, but all work, ritualistic and secular, with the highest spiritual knowledge through the doctrine of *Karma Yoga*. We have also the famous story of Dharma-vyādha, the pious butcher, who, possessed of the highest spirituality, had for the apparent means of its acquisition nothing but the faithful performance of his domestic and social duties. The Gautama Buddha faced the same conflict between ritualism and knowledge, but cut the Gordian knot by a total rejection of *Karma*. He did not try to harmonise them, but gave extreme predominance to *Jñāna*. This is perhaps one of the reasons why his religion was finally banished from the land of its birth. Sankara also had to fight hard against the predominance of ritualism, as is remarkably evidenced by the rise of Kumārila, Mandana Misra and other advocates of ritualistic *Karma*, some of whom later on acknowledged the supremacy of Sankara's philosophy. Sankara's commentaries are loud with the din of the sturdy fight between the contending parties.

The fight till the time of Sankara was mostly between ritualism and Self-knowledge. By then the superiority of *Jñāna* or *Bhakti* was generally accepted and ritualism was accorded a subordinate position. But we have seen that along with this, there was the further problem, as in the *Gītā*, whether the performance of secular duties and works prompted by healthy desires leads to the realisation of life's highest ideal. But it is true it did not then assume the importance it has done in the present age. The true worth of ritualism, however, has been determined once for all.

But the question of the value of secular work has been brought to the fore-front by the tremendous organisational activity and multifarious calls on individual attention and service, domestic, social, national, international, political, economical, etc., of the present day, none of which can be avoided with ease or without serious detriment to oneself. How should these be performed in order to be pathways to the realisation of God, —this is the all-important question. This question Swami Vivekananda has answered by his famous doctrine of the worship of the Divine in man.

The aim and purpose of Hinduism will be totally missed if the significance of the relative values of *Jñāna* and *Karma* and their conflict is forgotten. This conflict is no misfortune, on the other hand it supplies the very motive power of progress. It saves Hinduism from stagnation. Hinduism views the phenomenal world as evanescent. It looks askance at the reality of the world and its attractions and at the value of human desires and impulses. Life should be so conducted as to lead ultimately to the negation of its manifold aspect. It must not be inferred that this negation results in a dead vacuity. The Hindu posits a reality above all phenomena, which is unattainable by the changing mind, and it is towards the perception of that that the entire life-activity is made to move. This antagonistic attitude towards what are generally conceived as life and reality, finds its complete expression in the *Advaita* philosophy or what is known as *Māyā-vāda*.

This view of life and reality is at the basis of all Hindu religious and spiritual efforts. It provides the motive power to transcend lower visions and rise to the highest. Nothing satisfies. "There is no happiness in the finite. The Infinite alone is joy." Those who do not aim at the transcendental, can never get beyond the relative, nor can they properly appreciate it. This motive power is urgently needed by Hinduism which rejects no view of life and reality but accepts all. This all-inclusiveness,

if it has its strong points, has also its weakness. The exclusive and fixed creeds compel their votaries to live up to their defined ideals. The fixity of the credal ideal, therefore, impels one to strive constantly to reach the required heights. In Hinduism there are innumerable credal ideals to suit different tastes and capacities, not all of which are necessarily high. There may, therefore, be a tendency to be satisfied with the level of life already reached and with lower ideals. This danger is accentuated by the Hindu insistence on the votaries strictly adhering to their credal ideals. But as we have said before, this danger is completely obviated by looking upon life as a self-contradictory principle, veiling Truth and Reality. This spirit pervades every stratum of Hindu society, though its expression varies according to the education and capacity of the persons concerned. This spirit is called *Vairāgya*. No Hindu, whatever station of life he may occupy, will ever recognise that life and reality as he finds them now, anyway conform to the real life and reality. He is vaguely or clearly conscious of the conflict, and constantly tries to free himself from the bondages of desire and purify his spiritual vision. And with the clearing of vision, his credal ideal undergoes a transformation and reveals greater depths and finer contents. Thus he progresses along the path of religion till the highest is achieved.

Some misconceptions are prevalent about the relative values of the credal ideals. Some think that the purpose of Hinduism is to promote its adherents from one credal view to another according to their spiritual development. It is argued that the adherence of people to the same form of religion for generations shows a slackness and dullness of spirit. According to them, though a man may begin with image-worship or forms of dualistic worship, he must change the form as he progresses onwards. The true Hindu view, however, is not wholly this. The Hindu idea is

rather to discover, wherever possible, finer and finer contents in the same credal ideal. We do not deny one creed or worship and take to another. We find higher and higher meanings in the same ideal and form. That is how the same god assumes different significances with the passing of centuries till he represents the very highest. The understanding of this fact is specially necessary in order to go deep into Hindu catholicity. It is well-known that Hinduism never compels anyone to change his object or mode of worship. It allows every one absolute freedom. Thus various races with their various gods and goddesses and forms and ceremonies have found admission into Hindu society and lived undisturbed within its fold, evolving in their own ways. If it were the purpose of Hinduism to lead people from one mode of worship to another according to their mental development, there would have been a constant reshuffling of the members of the different races, groups and castes. That would have created social anarchy. And this process, on the whole, would not have been sufficiently beneficial. The idea is to uplift group by group. The same group must evolve and change its spiritual ideas and ideals according to its mental development. The crude aboriginal gods and goddesses would thus be refined more and more, till they would represent the highest ideals fit for cultured minds. If we search into the history of the development of Hindu gods and goddesses, we shall find this principle exemplified in many cases.

But it is true that this is not the only process. Sometimes progress is made the other way also. A whole group may accept a new spiritual ideal and mode of worship. Their effort then would be not to reject their old worship, but to reconcile it with the new. In all cases there is a general attempt not to deny anything, but to develop it into the ideal form. We have said that Hinduism never imposes any creed on any people or community but allows it full freedom to grow in its own way.

This does not mean that it allows it to drift. In certain respects Hinduism holds strong views. We have already mentioned the fundamental motive power of the Hindu life,—*Vairāgya*, the denial of the present vision of life as unreal. This view Hinduism slowly imposes on all who would call themselves Hindu. But this imposition is never drastic. It is a slow, unperceived process. The incorporated groups are slowly infiltrated with this outlook. It may take time to penetrate the new-comers. But that does not matter. Its work continues uninterrupted from day to day. Having been sure of this fundamental, Hinduism allows full freedom to individuals and communities to act and live in any way they choose.

### III

Naturally there are innumerable objects of worship, from the crudest to the subtlest, from stocks and stones to the Highest *Brahman*. All these Hinduism calls its own. It denies nothing. None of them are unreal. The savage worships animist gods, trees, stones, etc. This is also real. To the Semites, this seems an impossible proposition, because they fail to catch the inwardness of it. In all worship there are two elements. First, the objects of worship must be real. That is to say, they must really exist. Secondly, the worshippers must feel uplifted. That is, worship must lift them above the normal conditions of life and consciousness. The existence of the second element even in a savage's worship does not require to be proved. Even a savage by his crude worship feels himself improved (may be according to his own standard, but that is only what counts), otherwise he would not have continued with it. As regards the first element, doubts may well be entertained. Do trees, stocks or stones have an individuality superior to their savage worshippers? It is not easy to prove that they have. On the other hand, to our common experience, they are much inferior to them. But we may note a few points in this connection. There are

various spirits half-way between men and gods, and they have much to do with human affairs. Even savages are masters of many mysteries. Then, again, when trees or stones are worshipped, it is not these ostensible objects that are really worshipped. For they do not worship all stones and trees. Evidently the particular trees or stones worshipped are considered to possess beings which are different from the ordinary conceptions of stones or trees. In fact it is not the trees and stones that are worshipped, but other beings in and through them.

We have discussed the religion of the savage, because that touches the lowest point of the Hindu pantheon. From this we come to the well-known minor gods and goddesses. Hindus believe that these gods and goddesses have objective realities. They are not merely nature's forces or phenomena arbitrarily personified by men. They do exist, even as the visible objects exist. Human genius is protean, it is as wide as the cosmos itself. And this visible world is not the only world that exists. There are other worlds, finer and superior, inhabited by other beings. A conception of reality which excludes those other worlds, is defective and partial. It is not true to the whole. Hinduism, therefore, has scope for all experience. All experiences must have place in the scheme of knowledge. What is worship? We have attached to it a conventional meaning,—we mean by it some definite religious practices. Worship is not merely that. It is the realisation of a state of consciousness in and by which the whole of reality is known and possessed. Our so-called normal consciousness is extremely limited. It is hedged round by time and space. It knows and thereby possesses only a fraction of reality. We have to enlarge it. We have to transcend the present limits and thereby make our consciousness co-pervasive with the entire cosmos. What is the way? The way is to elude the limitations by forgetting them, by withdrawing the mind from them by means

of concentration. This concentration may be had by many different means, by identifying oneself, through thought, with a being representing a higher consciousness, by repeating a potent word, by reasoning, by killing out all desires, etc., etc. Thus do we transcend our present limits and become aware of the wider expanses of reality. A system with such a conception of worship naturally has to provide room for all spirits, demigods and gods in its pantheon.

Next come the great gods, the different conceptions of *Isvara*, God,—*Shiva*, *Kâli*, *Vishnu*, etc., the Divine Incarnations such as Rama, Krishna, Buddha, etc., and also the personal formless God—*Suguna Brahman*. And last of all, *Brahman*, the Absolute. These different grades really comprise all the objects of worship that men in different stages of spiritual development may conceive or have. New gods and goddesses may be discovered. They will also fall in either of these grades.

The question is often asked : Has God any form? Such a question would be pertinent only to the forms of *Isvara*. As regards the minor gods and demigods, it may be said that if there are visible beings, there may be finer, invisible beings also. Gods and goddesses are real, so also the forms of God. Many have seen them. It is not self-delusion or deception, as many moderns seem to think. There are some, however, who, though they believe that god-forms have been seen by devotees, would yet grant them only a subjective validity. They hold that by constant thinking of the forms, we make them appear as real,—they do not possess any objective existence. Those who argue thus, miss a crucial fact. The proof of the objective reality of the Divine visions is not that certain forms are *seen*, but that the visions are accompanied by an exaltation of feeling and an uplifting and widening of consciousness, which would not be if they were self-created illusions. We feel that we have suddenly reached a higher plane of conscious-

ness. We feel that the beings we are seeing are infinitely superior to us, and what is more, we perceive the presence of a deeper and higher reality. This last point is important. The sense of reality is an inner feeling. It is purely subjective. It is a state of consciousness. The higher the reality, the deeper is our sense of it. In fact, every grade of reality has a corresponding state of consciousness. When we have the highest state of consciousness, we know that we are experiencing the Divine Existence. It is not the *forms* that ensure the Divinity of our visions, but the *consciousness* accompanying them. Those who have the visions, can alone know whether they are real or illusory. How can others by mere ratiocination? There are other signs also. A genuine vision fills us with a joy the like of which we have never felt before. It is a joy of unusual kind and intensity. A genuine vision, again, leaves an indelible impress on our mind and life. Our whole life undergoes a change. Our outlook is transformed. We feel a new power surging within us. Our sense of unity grows more and more. We become unselfish. We feel a universal love. Fear of death disappears. We feel ourselves as above the zone of mortality. We become altogether better men. How can a mere subjective creation achieve all these? If they are still to be called subjective, they must be so in a peculiar sense. Yes, there is a subjective element in the visions also. But then, is there not the same subjectivity in our experience of the so-called objects of the world? Just as the ordinary objects of our experience are both subjective and objective, in the same sense, the Divine visions and the gods and goddesses also, are subjective and objective.

It may be asked : How is it that we realise God only in the forms in which we want to realise Him? Does it not show that the forms are *our* imposition? It is wrong to say that we realise God only in the forms in which we want to see Him. Cases are not rare, in which God has revealed Himself to *Sādhakas*

in unexpected and un contemplated forms. But it is true that devotees often realise God in the forms in which they meditate on Him. This, however, does not warrant the conclusion formed by the questioner. It only shows that human mind has a way of aspiring after God in the forms in which He actually exists. One psychological fact has to be remembered in this connection. We must admit that the idea and the form must conform to each other. We cannot fit any idea into any form. Necessarily the Divine Idea must have corresponding Divine forms. This significance of form must be carefully noted. Suppose I begin to meditate on a form of my choice and seek to realise it as Divine. If the form does not happen to be adequate for the Divine content, I shall fail to realise it as Divine, however hard I may try. In fact, I shall fail to concentrate my mind on it in the Divine spirit. This subtle law of mind is often ignored by those who believe that any form can be realised as Divine. We in our present degraded state cannot know which forms really correspond to the Divine Idea. Only one who has realised God, can know. The ordinary aspirant, therefore, has to depend on the experience of the sages. Certain forms have been known to belong to God. Only on those forms may we meditate to successfully realise Him, on none else.

Hence partly the prevalence of image-worship representing God in His actual forms. What is image-worship? It is now generally recognised that we do not worship the images themselves, but God Himself in and through the images. Image-worship helps the concentration of mind on God. It is often said that image-worship represents the lowest form of worship. In a sense it does. But in another, it is as high as any other. We have already noted the peculiarity of Hinduism that it does not ask us to relinquish one form in favour of another to realise a higher spiritual state. It wants us to see superior contents in the same form by means of inner development. Image-worship is

no exception. Even the highest spiritual realisations are possible through image-worship, only the meaning of image-worship changes as we progress along the spiritual path. The image itself becomes at last spiritualised. It is then not stone or any other earthly material, it is *chinmaya*, spirit itself. We know that in the higher planes of consciousness the universe with all its variegated objects appears as Divine. Both the substance and the forms of things are really spiritual. Why, then, should we not realise the images themselves as really spiritual and not merely as symbols of spirit? In this aspect, image-worship is on the same level with the highest spiritual experiences. In fact, in the whole of Hinduism we note a dual movement: one is the promotion of individuals from lower forms to higher forms as regards both objects and modes of worship; and the other is the interpretation of the same forms as higher and higher realities according to the aspirant's own self-development.

Infinite are the aspirations of the human mind, and infinite the facets of Reality. No two minds are same. There is no repetition in the creation of God. Everyone's outlook differs from the others'. And God fulfils all in their own ways. Every man seeks to reach God in his own way. Who can ever prescribe to him? The mind reaches towards all things. Hinduism admits that there are infinite ways of knowing the Truth and Reality and that everyone can have his individual path. This is the doctrine of *Ista-devatā*. God is as it were trying to unfold Himself in each being in a unique way. Your idea of God is not mine. All are realising the same God. But God is not a fixed and limited being. Infinite are His expressions and aspects, and we choose the aspects that appeal to us most. This freedom of choice is peculiarly Hinduistic. Like other religionists, we do not say that all must think of God in the same way, or that our view of the Truth is the only true view. What infinite horizons does not this doctrine open before us all!

This does not mean, however, that we can indulge in spiritual anarchy. When we have chosen one aspect of the Divine, we must stick to it till we have fully realised it. The choice, it is needless to mention, must be according to our nature, with due recognition of not only our present, but also future, tendencies. For unless the choice is made with an eye to the future, it may happen that we shall find our choice ill fitting with our future tendencies, and then a new choice will have to be made. Only a kind of omniscience can make a permanent choice. Hence the necessity of *Guru*. The *Guru* knows the past and future of the disciple. He has the necessary insight. He can tell us what is our *Ista*, and he can prescribe practices accordingly. Such *Gurus*, however, are not plentiful. But they are available, if we want them earnestly. Those who are not blessed by such *Gurus*, have necessarily to depend on their own insight. In most cases, people follow the ways of their fathers. And that is often useful, because most men do not take religion seriously. Those who are earnest about spiritual practice, have to find out a true *Guru*; and it is said that those who are really eager for God, will be provided by God Himself with an efficient teacher.

#### IV

It seems, that what we Hindus mean by seeing or realising God is often misunderstood by foreigners. Some time ago a Christian missionary published a book in which he brought together the confessions of many non-Christians, mostly Hindus, in order to show that Hindus have not found the Truth whereas many Christians whom also he quoted, affirmed the perception of the presence of God. It is an irony of the modern age that ignorance itself is nowadays a proof of spiritual superiority. Hindus, when they read such books, smile at the self-complacency of people like the above writer. They do not know what is meant by seeing or realising God, Hindus, even those who are



not spiritual enough, know what God-realisation means, what a rare experience it is, and after what struggle one can get a glimpse of the Eternal. The critics talk glibly of God-realisation, showing that they have not only not realised the truth, but have actually no idea what it means. God-realisation is an absolute transformation of the whole life. The man becomes so changed that there is always an air of super-humanity about him. His ways are no longer normal. His actions are far different from those of an ordinary man. And even his appearance changes. But of course these are but outward signs. And it is very difficult for us ordinary people to judge the men of realisation by these signs only; in fact we shall fail to cognise them all. Only he who has known God himself, can recognise a man of realisation. But when we come in touch with him, if we are pure and sincere, we somehow feel that we are in the presence of a superior reality, an intense life and an infinite consciousness. Our mind, in their presence, becomes calm of itself without any effort on our part, and a new peace and joy dawn on it. This is a sure sign.

What is God-realisation? It is no imagination or poetic sentiment or pious emotion. It is the direct experience of the eternal reality. We have already pointed out that the ultimate truth may be realised differently by different persons. But the psychological basis is the same in all cases: the mind must become absolutely calm. Subjectively considered, the universe is nothing but an aggregate of *vrittis*, mental modifications. Without the mind, the phenomenal universe as well as our finite personality would not be perceivable. It is because there are *vrittis* in the mind, therefore do we perceive the variegated world. When these *vrittis* die away and along with it the mind (for a mind without modifications is no mind), the universe vanishes and the Truth alone shines in its infinite glory. This is the realisation of the Absolute. The realisation of the Personal God is

only just a little short of this. Consider what struggle it requires to reach that blessed state where there is no mental modification. Until one tries, one cannot imagine the difficulty of it. Let us only try a little to calm our mind and we shall see that it is easier to calm a sea in storm than to tranquillise the mind. It is so restless! It runs in a thousand directions. It cannot be held to a point for a few seconds at a time. It runs. It has been compared to a drunken monkey which has been bitten by wasps and then lashed with a cane. Really the mind is still more restless than that. The Hindu knows that the real test of spiritual progress is the steady concentration of the mind on the Divine for all life. The mind must naturally dwell on God, unflinching, undeviating and undisturbed by the happenings of the phenomenal world. It is an effort of many lives to reach such a state. Day after day, year after year, life after life, we must try. Then only we shall reach that state of mental steadiness. God-realisation is no joke. Not only have our conscious desires and thoughts to be eliminated, but our unconscious and subconscious thoughts also have to be destroyed. What that means is known only to *Sādhakas*. Certain habits and thoughts are so deep-rooted in our mind, certain tendencies are so strong that even a single one of them may take years and lives to eradicate it. We, therefore, do not judge the spirituality of a man by his so-called faith, or his pious actions or charity, or by his professions. We judge a man by his power to eliminate mental modifications. He may adopt any means. But the requisite psychological state must be realised by him. And it must be natural with him. We may for a time realise a state of calmness by strenuous efforts. But it will not be lasting unless it has become spontaneous. And it cannot be so unless all our conscious and unconscious desires and *samskāras* have been eradicated completely.

The state of spiritual perfection is not

one of excellent action. It is a state of consciousness. That is to say, one must realise *Samādhi*. We are so ignorant and bound up with the life of the world that we think that the spiritual goal is also of a similar nature,—only one is perhaps a pleasanter and finer man in that state, that is all. But it is not so. We Hindus believe that the condition of spiritual consciousness is a condition of the absolute stillness of the life of the senses and mind. The senses then will not function. The mind will not move. It is a condition of apparent death. The relative life must *literally* die before we can attain the life eternal. This death is known to us as *Samādhi*. And no man, in our opinion, is truly spiritual, unless he has realised *Samādhi*. The more he is in that state, the more

spiritual he is. *This is the natural state of the soul.* We have already mentioned that a fundamental Hindu tendency is to look upon the relative life as unreal. This idea is fully actualised in *Samādhi*. But in order that this state may be realised, one has to practise it duly. And that is called meditation. What we try to do during our daily worship is to withdraw our consciousness from external things, from our senses and from our lower mind and focus it on God. This attempt is the essence of the Hindu's daily worship. Indeed this is so well recognised by the Hindus that if anyone feels a greater absorption in his worship so that he has been unconscious of the external disturbances, he considers his worship to have been more real and fruitful.

## THE DIARY OF A DISCIPLE

OCTOBER 15, 1919.

It was 4 p.m. Swami Turiyananda was sitting in his room in the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama at Benares with a few *Sannyāsins* and *Brahmachārins*. He was not feeling well. The conversation turned on milk.

*Swami*: "Once Upamanyu had a desire to drink milk. He had just returned from his aunt's place where he had tasted milk. He urged his mother to give him milk. She was a poor widow and could not afford to provide milk for her son. But as he still insisted, she mixed powdered rice with water and gave him that as milk. Upamanyu found that it did not taste like the stuff he had taken at his aunt's house. 'This is milk,' said the mother. But he would not believe. Then she began to cry. 'I am a poor woman,' she said, 'where shall I get milk, my child? Shiva is the giver of wealth. If you can satisfy him by your prayers and austerities, he may grant you the boon of abundant milk.' Upamanyu practised hard *tapasyā* until Mahādeva appeared to him and gave him the desired boon.

But that was not the only *tapasyā* he practised in his life. He is one of the great sages celebrated in the *Mahābhārata*.

"Of Sri Krishna's wives at Dwaraka, Jambavati had no son. One day she thus expressed her sorrow to Sri Krishna: 'Through your grace all have been favoured with sons except the unfortunate me who have none. Kindly bless me with a son.' Sri Krishna deliberated awhile, and then went away from Dwaraka to become a disciple of Upamanyu. He was initiated by Upamanyu and practised hard *tapasyā* under his guidance for the gratification of Shiva. Then through Shiva's grace, Jambavati gave birth to a son who came to be known as Shamba. You see, even Sri Krishna had to worship Shiva for a son. In the *Mahābhārata* there are many references to the cult of Shiva. Therefore Swami Vivekananda used to say: 'Shiva is the God of the *Mahābhārata* and not Sri Krishna.'

"I do not like buffalo's milk. It increases fat. Cow's milk is the best. Yudhisthira was fond of cow's milk from an early age, and Duryodhana of

buffalo's milk, and you see the difference of their nature.

"It is very wrong to waste a thing, however insignificant. Do you know how the Master rebuked one of us for cutting a lemon too deep? If any rice were left on the plate after meal, Sasi Maharaj used to be much annoyed."

K: "Yes, Maharaj. If anybody said that the rice could be given to dogs, he would be offended and would say: 'What! the food cooked for God should be given to dogs?'"

M. came in and sat down after saluting the Swami.

Swami: "How are you?"

M: "Quite well, Maharaj. There is no place like Benares. I did not know much about its greatness before. But the reading of the *Kashi-Khanda* has taken away all desire to go elsewhere."

Disciple: "The Governing Body of the R. K. Mission asked him (M) to inspect the branch centres. He has so far seen only Kankhal and Brindaban, and now he is settled here! We expected that he would go to Dacca in due course."

M: "Do not speak of Dacca. I am not leaving Benares."

K: "Yes, there is no place like Benares. If anyone lives here, his mind naturally becomes quiet and settles at the feet of Viswanath. Here from 3 o'clock in the morning, people go about crying: 'Lord Viswanath! Lord Viswanath!'"

Swami: "Yes, to live here is itself a spiritual discipline. One has daily to take bath in the Ganges and visit the temple of Viswanath. But I cannot unfortunately go and see Viswanath on account of a pain in the leg. Only once I did."

M: "The daily visit to the temple has created such a tendency in me that I feel very unhappy if I miss it a single day."

Disciple: "But unlucky as I am, I never felt like that. When I go to the temple, I only see a block of stone and nothing else. I never feel any attraction like yours."

Swami: "Ah, what do you say? All feel like M. How is it that you do not?"

Disciple: "It is no use saying that I feel when I really do not. From times immemorial, men and women have been coming to Benares to visit Viswanath. There must be some meaning in that, I know. Yet I do not feel any attraction."

Swami: "If a person cannot weep from devotion, he can do so by applying oil and chilli powder in his eyes. One actually did so at the time of Sri Chaitanya. When Sri Chaitanya held *Kirtana* in the house of Srivasa, everyone shed tears through devotion. But there was one who could not. This made him very sad. So one day he applied chilli powder in his eyes at the time of *Kirtana* and thus shed tears. When Sri Chaitanya came to know of it, he ran up to him and embraced him. He thought that the man must have great devotion, otherwise he would not have been so grieved for not being able to weep."

K: "He (disciple) speaks sincerely. I am sure he also is miserable for not feeling any attraction for Viswanath."

Swami: "You will feel it, you will feel it. Through His grace, the feeling will come of itself."

OCTOBER 16, 1919.

It was 4 p.m. Swami Turiyananda was reading a letter in his room at the R. K. Mission Sevashrama at Benares. It was written to him from Rangoon by Brahmachari K. It said that relief centres had been opened for the flood and famine-stricken people there and nearly a thousand rupees were spent every month. Besides, 400 maunds of rice were being distributed being given by a kind-hearted gentleman. K. had to direct the whole work with the help of a worker. The relief extended over an area of 100 square miles, and people living even 16 or 17 miles away received help.

Swami: "K. regrets that he whose grace has made it possible for him to

do all this, is not seeing this in the material body. He speaks of Baburam Maharaj. It is he who attracted him to this life. It is well written by K.—‘is not seeing this in the material body,’ that is, he is seeing, but not in the material body. Do you know anything of K’s former life? He is a great worker. He is conducting such a big work alone.”

*Disciple:* “He can work very hard. I have noted that whenever any work is started, there is no lack of money through His grace. We have only to collect it. Unfortunately there are few to do even this. Wherever I have gone, I have found that it is not money that is wanting, but men.”

*Swami:* “Yes. The Kankhal R. K. Mission Sevashrama was started in a rented house only with Rs. 150 in hand. The permanent site was afterwards secured. The workers were known to a *Sâdhu* who was much respected by a rich merchant. Once when the merchant visited the *Sâdhu*, he let fall some hints to the merchant to help the Sevashrama. Accordingly he went there one day and came to know that a pucca house was required to prevent the mischief of the monkeys who entered the huts in which the Sevashrama was then housed, and destroyed the medicines. He asked for an estimate and went away. This was however delayed. So he came another day and asked them to hurry it. He said: ‘I am a householder. I am now disposed to do charity. But when I return home, my mind may change. Then it would be difficult for me to give anything.’ Thus the dispensary building and the residence of

the workers were built at a cost of Rs. 6,000.

“A Judge used to supply raw food-stuff worth Rs. 15 every month to the Kankhal Sevashrama. Some one spoke to him against the Sevashrama. One day he paid a surprise visit and was much impressed with the care and attention with which the patients were treated and nursed by the workers: he found one of the workers cleaning a deadly ulcer of a patient. He then gave out the purpose of his visit and said: ‘I am convinced by what I have seen that you are indeed blessed and my gift is also blessed!’

“The Sevashrama is situated in a nice place. Opposite to it, on the other side of the canal, is Rishikesh. Here at Benares, K. and others started the Sevashrama with only a four-anna bit.

“A gentleman of Khetri donated Rs. 300 towards the establishment of the Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama here. With this sum, Swami Shivananda started the institution and worked at it continuously for five years. During this period he left Benares only twice and that for collecting funds at Almora and another place. Once when I was at Almora, he made a door-to-door collection of several hundred rupees from shop-keepers for the flood-relief in East Bengal.”

*K:* “I also lived in the Advaita Ashrama in the beginning. Only five *châpâtis* were offered to *Sri Guru Maharaj* (Sri Ramakrishna) in the evening. So each of us received only two and half pices for night meal. Even that we could not continue long for want of money.”

(Concluded)

## CIVITAS DEI—THE CITY OF MANKIND\*

BY ROMAIN ROLLAND

Equilibrium and synthesis: in these two words Vivekananda’s constructive

genius may be summed up. He embraced all the paths of the spirit: the

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four Yogas in their entirety, renunciation and service, art and science, religion and action from the most spiritual to the most practical. Each of the ways that he taught had its own limits, but he himself had been through them all, and embraced them all. As in a quadriga he held the reins of all four ways of truth, and he travelled along them all simultaneously towards Unity. He was the personification of the harmony of all human Energy.

But the formula could not have been discovered by the brilliant intellect of the "Discriminator," if his own eyes had not seen its realisation in the harmonious personality of Ramakrishna. The angelic Master had instinctively resolved all the dissonances of life into a Mozartian harmony, as rich and sweet as the Music of the Spheres. And hence the work and the thought of the great disciple was all carried out under the Sign of Ramakrishna.

"The time was ripe for one to be born, who in one body would have the brilliant intellect of Sankara and the wonderfully expansive infinite heart of Chaitanya; one who would see in every sect the same spirit working, the same God; one who would see God in every being, one whose heart would weep for the poor, for the weak, for the down-trodden, for every one in this world, inside India or outside India; and at the same time whose grand brilliant intellect would conceive of such noble thoughts as would harmonise all conflicting sects not only in India but outside of India, and bring a marvellous harmony. . . . The time was ripe, it was necessary that such a man should be born . . . and I had the good fortune to sit at his feet. . . . He came, the living spirit of the Upanishads, the accomplishment of Indian sages, the sage for the present day . . . the harmony. . . ."

Vivekananda wished this harmony that had come to fruition in one privileged being and had been enjoyed by a few select souls, to be extended to the

whole of India and the world. Therein lies his courage and originality. He may not have produced one single fresh idea: he was essentially the offspring of the womb of India, one of many eggs laid by that indefatigable queen ant throughout the course of ages. . . . But all her different ants never combined into an ant-hill. Their separate thoughts seemed to be incompatible, until they appeared in Ramakrishna as a symphony. The secret of their divine order was thus revealed to Vivekananda, and he set out to build the City—*Civitas Dei*—the City of Mankind on the foundation of this golden concrete.

But he had not only to build the city but the souls of its inhabitants as well.

The Indian representatives, who are the authorities for his thought, have acknowledged that he was inspired in its construction by the modern discipline and organised effort of the West as well as by the Buddhist organisation of ancient India.<sup>1</sup>

He conceived the plan of an Order whose central Math, the mother house, was to "represent" for centuries to come "the physical body of Ramakrishna."

This Math was to serve the double purpose of providing men with the means "to attain their own liberation, so that they might prepare themselves for the progress of the world and the betterment of its conditions." A second Math was to realise the same object for women. These two were to be disseminated throughout the world; for the Swami's journeys and his cosmopolitan education had convinced him that the aspirations and needs of humanity at the present time are universally one. The day seemed to have dawned for the "great India" of old to resume its ancient mission: that of evangelising the earth. But unlike "God's chosen peoples" in the past, who have interpreted their duty in the narrow sense of

<sup>1</sup> It was also the ideal of the Vedas: "Truth is one but it is called by different names."

spiritual imperialism, implying the right to inflict their own uniform and tight-fitting casque, the Vedântist missionary, according to his own law, respects the natural faith of each individual. He desires only to reawaken the Spirit in man, "to guide individuals and nations to the conquest of their inner kingdom, by their own ways which are best suited to them, by the means corresponding best to the needs from which they suffer most." There is nothing in this to which the proudest nationalism can take exception. No nation is asked to forsake its own ways. It is asked rather to develop to the fullest, highest degree the God that is in them.

But, like Tolstoy whose thought, the offspring of his good sense and kind heart, was unknown to him, Vivekananda saw that his first duty was towards his nearest neighbour, his own people. Throughout the pages of this book the trembling of India incarnate in him has appeared again and again. His universal soul was rooted in its human soil; and the smallest pang suffered by its inarticulate flesh sent a repercussion through the whole tree.

He himself was the embodied unity of a nation containing a hundred different nations, wherein each nation, divided and subdivided into castes and sub-castes, seems like one of those diseased persons whose blood is too liquid to congeal, and his ideal was unity, both of thought and of action. His claim to greatness lies in the fact that he not only *proved* its unity by reason, but *stamped* it upon the heart of India in flashes of illumination. He had a genius for arresting words, and burning phrases hammered out white-hot in the forge of his soul so that they transpierced thousands. The one that made the deepest impression was the famous phrase: "Daridra-Nârâyana" (the beggar God) . . . . The only God that exists, the only God in whom I believe . . . my God the miserable, my God the poor of all races." It may justly be said that India's destiny was

changed by him, and that his teaching re-echoed throughout Humanity.

Its mark is to be found, a burning scar, like the spear-thrust that pierced the heart of the *Son of Man* on the Cross—in the most significant happenings in India during the last twenty years. When the Swarajist party of the National Congress of India (a purely political body) triumphed in the Calcutta Municipal Council, they drew up a programme of communal work called the "Daridra Nârâyana" Programme. And the striking words have been taken up again by Gandhi and are constantly used by him. At one and the same time the knot was tied between religious contemplation and service of the lower orders. "He surrounded service with a divine aureole and raised it to the dignity of a religion." The idea seized upon the imagination of India; and relief works for famine, flood, fire, epidemic, such as were practically unknown thirty years before, Sevâ-âshramas and Sevasamitis (retreats and societies for social service) have multiplied throughout the country. A rude blow had been struck at the selfishness of a purely contemplative faith. The rough words, which I have already quoted, uttered by the kindly Ramakrishna: "Religion is not for empty bellies . . ." embody the teaching that the desire to awaken spirituality in the heart of the people must be deferred until they have first been fed. Moreover to bring them food is not enough; they must be taught how to procure it and work for it themselves. It is necessary to provide the wherewithal and the education. Thus it embraced a complete programme of social reform, although it held strictly aloof, in accordance with the wishes of Vivekananda, from all political parties. On the other hand it was the solution of the age-long conflict in India between spiritual life and active life. The service of the poor did not only help the poor, but it helped their helpers even more effectively. According to the old saying, "He who gives, re-

ceives." If Service is done in the true spirit of worship, it is the most efficacious means to spiritual progress. For, "without doubt man is the highest symbol of God and his worship is the highest form of worship on earth."

"Begin by giving your life to save the life of the dying, that is the essence of religion."

So India was hauled out of the shifting sands of barren speculation wherein she had been engulfed for centuries, by the hand of one of her own Sannyâsins; and the result was that the whole reservoir of mysticism, sleeping beneath, broke its bounds, and spread by a series of great ripples into action. The West ought to be aware of the tremendous energies liberated by these means.

The world finds itself face to face with an awakening India. Its huge prostrate body lying along the whole length of the immense peninsula, is stretching its limbs and collecting its scattered forces. Whatever the part played in this reawakening by the three generations of trumpeters during the previous century—(the greatest of whom we salute, the genial Precursor: Ram Mohun Roy), the decisive call was the trumpet blast of the lectures delivered at Colombo and Madras.

And the magic watchword was Unity. Unity of every Indian man and woman (and world-unity as well); of all the powers of the spirit: dream and action, reason, love and work. Unity of the hundred races of India with their hundred different tongues and hundred thousand gods springing from the same religious centre, the core of present and future reconstruction. Unity of the thousand sects of Hinduism. Unity within the vast Ocean of all religious thought and all rivers past and present, Western and Eastern. For—and herein lies the difference between the Awakening of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda and that of Ram Mohun Roy and the Brâhmo Samâj—in these days India refuses allegiance to the imperious civilisation of the West, she defends her own ideas, she has steeped into her age-

long heritage with the firm intention not to sacrifice any part of it but to allow the rest of the world to profit by it, and to receive in return the intellectual conquests of the West. The time is past for the pre-eminence of one incomplete and partial civilization. Asia and Europe, the two giants are standing face to face as equals for the first time. If they are wise they will work together, and the fruit of their labours will be for all.

This "greater India," this new India—whose growth politicians and learned men have, ostrich fashion, hidden from us and whose striking effects are now apparent—is impregnated with the soul of Ramakrishna. The twin star of the Paramahansa and the hero who translated his thought into action, dominates and guides her present destinies. Its warm radiance is the heaven working within the soil of India and fertilising it. The present leaders of India: the king of thinkers, the king of poets and the Mahâtma—Aurobindo Ghose, Tagore and Gandhi—have grown, flowered and borne fruit under the double constellation of the Swan and the Eagle—a fact publicly acknowledged by Aurobindo and Gandhi.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Gandhi has affirmed in public that the study of the Swami's books has been a great help to him, and that they increased his love and understanding of India. He wrote an Introduction to the English edition of the *Life of Sri Ramakrishna*, and has attended some anniversary festivals of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda celebrated by the Ramakrishna Mission.

"The spiritual and intellectual life of Aurobindo Ghose," Swami Ashokananda wrote to me, "has been strongly influenced by the life and teaching of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. He is never tired of showing the importance of Vivekananda's ideas."

As for Tagore, whose Goethe-like genius stands at the junction of all the rivers of India, it is permissible to presume that in him are united and harmonised the two currents of the Brahmo Samaj (transmitted to him by his father, the Maharshi) and of the new Vedântism of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. Rich in both, free in both, he has serenely wedded the West and the East in his own spirit. From the social and national point of view his only public announcement of his

The time seems to me to have come for the rest of the world, ignorant as yet, except for isolated groups of Anglo-Saxons, of this marvellous movement, to profit by it. Those who have followed me in this work must certainly have noticed how closely the views of the Indian Swami and his Master are in accord with many of our secret thoughts. I can bear witness to it, not only on my own account, but as a result of the intellectual avowal that has been made to me for the last twenty years by the hundreds of souls of Europe and America, who have made me their uninvited confidant and confessor. It is not because they and I have unwittingly been subject to infiltrations of the Indian spirit which predisposed us to the contagion—as certain representatives of the Ramakrishna Mission appear to believe. On this subject I have had courteous discussion with Swami Ashokananda, who starting from the assumption of fact that Vedântic ideas are disseminated throughout the world, concluded that this was, partly at least, the work of Vivekananda and his Mission. I am quite convinced of the contrary. The work, thought and even the name of Vivekananda are practically unknown to the world in general (a fault that I am trying to rectify); and if among the deluge of ideas that come to water with their substance the burning soil of Europe and America in these days, one of the most life-giving and fertilising streams may be called "Vedântic," that is so in the same way that the natural speech of Monsieur Jourdain was "prose" without his knowing it—because it is a natural medium of thought for mankind.<sup>3</sup>

ideas was, if I am not mistaken, about 1906 at the beginning of the Swadeshi movement, four years after Vivekananda's death. There is no doubt that the breath of such a fore-runner must have played some part in his evolution.

<sup>3</sup> We hope to give our remarks on this interesting subject under discussion in a future issue.—Ed.

What are the so-called essentially Vedântic ideas? According to the definition of one of the most authoritative spokesmen of modern Ramakrishnite Vedântism, they can be reduced to two principles :

1. *The Divinity of man,*

2. *The essential spirituality of Life,* while the immediate consequences deduced from them are :

1. That every society, every state, every religion ought to be based on the recognition of this All-Powerful presence latent in man ;

2. that in order to be fruitful all human interests ought to be guided and controlled according to the ultimate idea of the spirituality of life.

These ideas and aspirations are none of them alien to the West. Our Asiatic friends, who judge Europe by our bankrupts—our politicians, our traders, our narrow-minded officials, our "ravening wolves whose gospel is their maw," the whole of our colonial personal (both the men and their ideas)—have good reason to doubt our spirituality. Nevertheless it is deep and real, and has never ceased to water the subsoil and roots of our great Western nations. The oak of Europe would long ago have been hurled to the ground by the tempests that have raged round it, if it had not been for the mighty spiritual sap rising ceaselessly from its silent reservoir. They accord us a genius for action. But the unflagging feverishness of this age-long action would be impossible without inner fires—not the lamp of the Vestal Virgins, but a Cyclopiian crater where the igneous substance is tirelessly amassed and fed. The writer of this work has denounced and disavowed the "Market Place" of Europe, the smoke and cinders of the volcano, with sufficient sternness to be able to vindicate the burning sources of our inexhaustible spirituality. He has never ceased to recall their existence and the persistence of "better Europe," both to outsiders who misunderstand her and to herself as she sits wrapped in silence. "*Silet sed loquitur.*" But her silence



speaks more loudly than the babel of charlatans. Beneath the frenzy of enjoyment and power consuming themselves in surface eddies of a day or of an hour, there is a persistent and immovable treasure made up of abnegation, sacrifice and faith in the Spirit.

As for the divinity of man, such a conception is possibly not one of the fruits of Christianity or of Greco-Roman culture, if they are considered separately. But it is the fruit of the engrafted tree of Greco-Roman heroism superimposed upon the vine, whose golden juice is the blood of the Son of God. And whether it has forgotten the Christian wine stalk and wine press or no, the heroic idealism of our democracies in their great moments and their great leaders have retained its taste and scent. A religion whose God has been familiar for nineteen hundred years to the people of Europe by the name of the "Son of Man," cannot wonder that man should have taken it at its word and claimed Divinity for himself. The new consciousness of his power and the intoxication of his young liberty, were still more exalted by the fabulous conquests of science, which in half a century have transformed the face of the earth. Man came to believe himself God without the help of India. He was only too ready to bow down and worship himself. This state of over-valuation of his power lasted up to the very eve of the catastrophe of 1914, which shattered all his foundations. And it is from that very moment that the attraction and domination of Indian thought over him can be traced. How is this to be explained?

Very simply. His own paths had led the Westerner by his reason, his science and his giant will to the cross-roads where he met the Vedantic thought, that was the issue of our great common ancestors, the Aryan demi-Gods, who in the flower of their heroic youth saw from their high Himalayan plateaus, like Bonaparte when he had completed the conquest of Italy, the whole world

at their feet. But at that critical moment when the test of the strong awaited them (as it appears under various names in the myths of all countries, and which our Gospel relates as the Temptation of Jesus on the mountain), the Westerner made the wrong choice. He listened to the tempter, who offered him the empire of the world spread out beneath him. From the divinity that he attributed to himself he saw and sought for nothing but that material power represented by the wisdom of India as the secondary and dangerous attribute of the inner force that alone can lead man to the Goal. The result is that to-day the European—the "Apprentice Sorcerer"—sees himself overwhelmed by the elemental powers he has blindly unloosed. For he has nothing but the letter of the formula to control them. He has not been concerned with the spirit. Our civilisation in its dire peril has vainly invoked the spell of great words: Right, Liberty, Co-operation, the Peace of Geneva or Washington—but such words are void or filled with poisonous gas. Nobody believes in them. People mistrust explosives. Words bring evils in their train, and have made confusion worse confounded. At the present time it is only a profound misunderstanding of the mortal illness from which a whole generation in the West has been suffering, that makes it possible for the dregs and the scum who have known how to profit from the situation to murmur: "After us, the Deluge!" But millions of unsatisfied beings find themselves fatally driven to the cross-roads where they must choose between the abdication of what remains of their freedom,—implied by the return of the discouraged soul to the park of the dead order of things wherein, though imprisoned, it is warmed and protected by the grease of the flock—and the great void in the night leading to the heart of the stronghold of the besieged Soul, where it may rejoin its still intact reserves and establish itself firmly in the *Feste Burg* of the Spirit.

And that is where we find the hand of our allies, the thinkers of India stretched out to meet us: for they have known for centuries past how to entrench themselves in this *Feste Burg* and how to defend it, while we, their brethren of the Great Invasions, have spent our strength in conquering the rest of the world. Let us stop and recover our breath! Let us lick our wounds! Let us return to our eagle's nest in the Himalayas. It is waiting for us, for it is ours. Eaglets of Europe, we need not renounce any part of our real nature. Our real nature is in the nest, whence we formerly took our flight; it dwells within those who have known how to keep the keys of our keep—the Sovereign Self. We have

only to rest our tired limbs in the great inner lake. Afterwards, my companions, with fever abated and new power flowing through your muscles, you will again resume your Invasions, if you wish to do so. Let a new cycle begin, if it is the Law. But this is the moment to touch Earth again, like Anteus, before beginning a new flight! Embrace it! Let your thoughts return to the Mother! Drink her milk! Her breasts can still nourish all the races of the world.

Among the spiritual ruins strewn all over Europe, our "Mother India" will teach you to excavate the unshakable foundations of your Capitole. She possesses the calculations and the plans of the "Master Craftsman". Let us rebuild our house with our own materials.

## THE FRUITS OF TENSION

*A point of View respecting Occidental-Oriental Relations*

BY GLENN FRANK.

### I

I am suspicious of all professional up-lifters, and I suspect that half or more of the propagandist societies in which banal men and bored wives seek escape from their otherwise rapid and vacuous lives, hinder rather than help the elaboration of a rational and humanistic social order. I am happy to share in this dinner-conference tonight because I think this cause and this company exempt from this indictment.

The New Orient Society commands my intense interest as one of the instruments of a significant adventure in mutual understanding between the Occidental and the Oriental mind, as a symbol of that spiritual cross-fertilization between the civilizations of the West and the civilization of the East, upon the success or failure of which may well depend whether the new scientific knowledge, the technological powers, the economic might, and the political ideologies and instruments of modern man shall ultimately prove sovereign or servant.

The throw of the dice has made us, quite without our choosing, citizens of an era in which the ideals of the West and the ideals of the East are at tension. The fact of tension is not in itself regrettable. The ages of triumphant genius have invariably been ages of tension. The ages of smugness and security have been ages of sterility. I hope that a creative tension between the soul of the West and the soul of the East will never disappear. Nothing more tragic for the future of mankind could happen than that West and East should, by a kind of huckster bargaining, iron the Occident and the Orient out into a drab sameness of aim and action. I hope that India will never trade her faith for a Ford. I hope that the West will never trade its dynamos for the futile day-dreaming which is the bastard offspring of the fruitful intuition of the Eastern spirit. I should not care to live in a world that had been transformed into a vast Shaker Village of sterile uniformity. The fact of this West-East tension is probably beyond our control—

happily beyond our control. But the *fruits* of this tension are, I think, within our power to determine.

Let me deliberately over-simplify the issue by saying that Occidentals and Orientals, as they face the common problem of determining the fruits that shall ripen from the existing tension between the West and the East, may choose either of two methods—the method of conflict or the method of comprehension. It behoves us to subject these two methods to sustained analysis if we are to come wisely to this sacrament of choice. Let me, first, suggest something of the nature of the tension that now exists between the civilizations of the West and the civilizations of the East, and then speak, with the utmost brevity, of the relative significance of the method of conflict and the method of comprehension in determining the fruits of this tension.

## II

We are, as I suggested earlier, citizens of an era in which the ideals of the West and the ideals of the East are at tension. This fact of tension promises to dominate the world politics of the next half century. Following the lead of party bosses or personal beliefs, we may be either isolationist or internationalist, but, regardless of our attitude in matters of American foreign policy, our lives will be definitely affected by this tension between Occident and Orient. I am not so much concerned tonight with the studied amiabilities or the blundering ineptitudes of state papers on foreign policy as with the tone and temper of the peoples alike of the Occident and of the Orient. It is of the effect this East-West tension registers in the popular mind of the Occident and in the popular mind of the Orient that I want to speak; for, after all, the popular mind is the soil out of which foreign policies spring, save in those rare instances when God lends one of his prophets to politics to prove to an opportunistic age that, now and then,

leaders may best serve their followers by differing from them.

A lot has lately been written about the rising tide of color against white-world supremacy. The colored races of the East are pictured as poised to spring at the throats of the white races of the West. But the current revolt of the East against the West is deeper and more complex than the simple threat of military retaliation, inspired by hunger for economic advantage and the humiliation of exclusion acts, with which our professional patriots and racial fundamentalists seek to terrorize the unstable Babbitt. The revolt of the East against the West is inspired not so much by hatred of the white-man's power, political or economic, as by a profound disbelief in the white-man's philosophy of life. This revolt is no less real because only here and there has it expressed itself in overt military action. It is, in fact, a triple revolt, expressing itself in a political revolt, a cultural revolt, and a social revolt.

Let me speak particularly of the cultural aspect of this triple revolt of the East against the West, for this cultural chasm between the ideals of the East and the ideals of the West is the major factor in the West-East tension we are met to consider tonight. The political revolt is too obvious to require analysis here. Rarely does the morning paper lack evidence of a growing hunger for national unity among the peoples of the Orient, and the wires quiver with reports of the uprising of whole peoples against foreign domination, and stories of sustained crusades for a new home-ruled nationalism. China-for-the-Chinese is a familiar slogan. And some of the rarest spirits of India are today bruising themselves against the bars of British control. The political revolt is, I repeat, too obvious to require analysis here. The social and cultural aspects of the revolt of Easternism against Westernism are more subtle, and will, in the long run, prove more significant. This socio-cultural revolt

is being stimulated and stage-managed by three fairly distinct types of Oriental leadership.

There are, first, those Orientals who resent, reject, and rebel against the whole philosophy of the machine civilization of the West. These leaders are not the ward politicians of the Orient, scheming for personal prestige and power, but the convinced philosophic enemies of Westernism. Mahatma Gandhi is, perhaps, the exemplar extraordinary of this type of Oriental leadership. Since the basic scepticism of the validity of Western ideals that animates this first type of leadership runs with varying degrees of intensity through the whole of the cultural revolt of the East, it is worth while to sample its spirit.

"Westernism is a more dreaded tyrant than Westerners," Gandhi once said to a friend of mine. "You (Westerners) are headed for terrific catastrophe and misery. You are a wonderful people, too. You do not lack the spirit of sacrifice, the ability to forego the things of the body. Look at your North Pole adventurers, your Mount Everest climbers. Why can you not be as willing to give up bodily luxury for the sake of spiritual adventures? There is a wistfulness, a longing, a spiritual hunger among you American people in particular today. But no practice. You glory in speed, thinking not of the goal. You think your souls are saved because you can invent radio. But of what elevation to man is a method of broadcasting when you have only drivel to send out? What mark of civilization is it to be able to produce a one hundred and twenty page newspaper in one night, when most of it is either banal or actually vicious and not two columns of it are worth preserving? What contribution to man has aeronautics made, which can balance its use in his self-destruction? You are children playing with razors. You have cut yourselves badly already. Europe's frenzy for reading prophecies of its own destruction shows how badly you have been hurt. I have read your German professor's

*Decline of the West*, your French debater's *Twilight of the White Races* with great sadness and warning. America still seems self-confident. Next time it will be America that will suffer, and when she cuts herself as badly as Europe she will be in the same state of mind. Such of you as survive will come back to Asia for another way of life. You are already coming: Count Keyserling from Germany, Romain Rolland from France, many less eloquent from England and America. If I should now allow the West, in its boyishly confident rowdyism, utterly to crush out our opposing system of life and ideals through political power and material influence, would I not be playing traitor, not only to my own people, but to you very Westerners as well?"

Thus speak the confirmed philosophic enemies of Westernism. This first type of Oriental leadership feels a God-given responsibility for preserving unbroken the chalice of the spirit so that when we Westerners return repentant from our sinful orgies of inhuman industrialism, we may find it there to drink from.

There are, second, those Orientals who think there is much in Western civilization that the East would do well to admire and to adopt, but who resent having all of Western civilization shoved down their throats by outsiders, whether the outsiders be missionaries or militarists. These leaders of the cultural revolt of the Orient want to select the parts of Western civilization they are to adopt and to adopt them in their own way and in their own time.

And then there are, third, occasional Orientals who are whole-hearted converts to the civilization of the West that has been born of the marriage of physical science and technological industry. These Easterners would completely Westernize the Orient. But even these Orientals want to do the Westernizing themselves. They refuse to be Westernized by the Westerners. They like the culture of the West, but they loathe the culturizers of the West.

I am not unaware of the role that

raw materials and the race for power and position in a possible next world war play in the tension between West and East, but back of all these factors stands the fundamental fact of the philosophical divergence of the mind of the West and the mind of the East, a divergence that has bred this cultural revolt of Orientalism against Occidentalism. Here is the *fact* of tension between West and East, a fact so obvious that he who runs may read. What shall be the *fruits* of this tension? We cannot hazard even a speculative answer to this question until we know something of the method of approach that is to be employed by Occidentals and by Orientals as they face this issue of divergent conceptions of civilization. I said a moment ago that Occidentals and Orientals, as they face the common problem of determining the fruits that shall ripen from this existing tension between West and East, may choose either of two methods—the method of conflict or the method of comprehension. Let me speak briefly of some of the implications of these two methods of approach.

### III

The implications of the method of conflict are obvious but all too often overlooked. It is worth while, therefore, to restate them, even if they smack of stale platitude. It is by no means certain that West and East alike will not choose or at least drift into the method of conflict. I hesitate to speak of the possibility of conflict between West and East lest someone may think I am putting on parade those two favorite fairy tales of the fanatic chauvinists—the rising tide of color against white-world supremacy and the menace of a militarized Japan. I hasten to say that I do not myself belong to the peril school of foreign affairs.

The theory of a rising tide of color against white-world supremacy does credit to the creative powers of the romanticist, but it gets short shrift at

the hands of the realist. The most dependable research to which I have access indicates that, while there is at the moment a higher tide of color, there is not a *rising* tide of color. There are more colored than white folk in the world at the moment: 1,040,000,000 colored; 710,000,000 white. The white races are a racial plurality, but they are not a racial majority. There is a higher tide of color. Whether there is a rising tide of color depends upon the relative rapidity with which the colored races and the white races are reproducing. The peddlers of the peril of color contend that the colored races are increasing faster than the white races. A time-consuming detailed study by E. M. East, distinguished Harvard scientist, establishes to my satisfaction the following facts:

There are 650,000,000 whites of European origin. Their annual increase per thousand is 12. They will, at this rate, double in 58 years.

There are 60,000,000 whites of non-European origin. Their annual increase per thousand is 8. They will, at this rate, double in 87 years.

There are 420,000,000 browns. Their annual increase per thousand is 2.5. They will, at this rate, double in 278 years.

There are 510,000,000 yellows. Their annual increase per thousand is 3. They will, at this rate, double in 282 years.

There are 110,000,000 blacks. Their annual increase per thousand is 5. They will, at this rate, double in 139 years.

The white race is today numerically larger than any other single racial group, although it is by no means in the majority; but over two-thirds of the annual increase in the world's population is white. This means that before 1950 the white race will constitute a clear majority of the world's population, unless there occurs "some radical and relatively permanent overturn of world affairs." My dreams are not disturbed by any rising tide of color breaking in sinister spray over the foot-board of my bed.

In like manner, the researches of the realists explode the notion of an invincible militarized East. The materials of war simply are not at hand in the East. The mineral resources of the Orient, upon which modern war is so fully dependent, are scattered. Iron in this country. Coal in that country. Oil in still another country. Added to this natural dispersion of the resources upon which a fighting East would have to depend, is the political chaos that here, there, and yonder throughout the Orient will prevent, for generations to come, any unified control and use of even the resources that there are.

But in the absence of any effort towards creative comprehension between West and East, we may fall into conflict even if it be ill-advised and suicidal from the point of view of the ultimate interests of the Orient. I want, therefore, to underscore the fact that, regardless of its outcome, neither West nor East stands to realize any permanent gain from conflict.

It is doubtful, I think, that any people has ever profited, in the deeper sense of the word, by winning a war. The paradox of war is that the victor is never victorious. In war, both sides lose. Victory and defeat are but figures of speech. For this seems to be an immutable law of conflict, even when the conflict is inspired by mutual hatred, that in the end the enemies trade souls. We become like the thing we fight. And whether we win or lose, in the common sense of these words, does not alter the fact. I pick at random two illustrations of the way in which, in conflicts, the loser becomes like the winner and the winner like the loser.

For a long stretch of years there has been the accumulating tension between Occident and Orient which we are discussing tonight. It has not been an open conflict. And yet the element of the decisive begins to appear. Westernism is marching with seven league boots across the world. For good or ill, the civilization born of physical

science and technological industry moves in the ascendant. The West seems destined to go American. And the world seems destined to go Western. But despite the unwarlike character of this subtle transformation of the world, the law of conflict to which I have referred is beginning to register its effects in both West and East. Western civilization, despite the gap between its professions and its performance, has long symbolized and preached democracy, equality, and the objectivity of science. Eastern civilization, despite the gap between its professions and its performance, has long symbolized and preached aristocracy, the inequality of caste, and the mystic's concern with the inner meanings of objective facts. But today, as even this suppressed conflict between West and East continues, West and East begin to trade souls.

The East is beginning to take seriously the concepts of democracy and equality just when the West is beginning to drop them or at least to subject them to sceptical reassessment. At the same time the West is beginning to breed its Romain Rollands, its Count Keyserlings, and, as Gandhi suggests, a host of less picturesque prophets who are exhorting the West to seek the inner meanings of its outer life of power and prosperity. Although its tones are as yet timid and half-afraid, the voice of the mystic begins to be heard above the roar of our machines.

Or, again, in the world war, Allied democracies fought a German autocracy. The Allied democracies seemed to win the war against the German autocracy. And yet today the erstwhile German autocracy moves in the direction of a social democracy, while here and there Allied democracies surrender their souls to swaggering dictatorships. And those who have not are looking wistfully over their shoulders at the swift efficiencies of the cinema Napoleons who have arisen in neighboring states.

The social history of mankind would seem to say that the only victories that

are clear and clean are moral victories that woo their way to power by the convincing value of a deeper insight and a more creative comprehension of the common interest of both parties that are at tension. Experience may yet convince us that *Nachtpolitik* is not *Realpolitik*, that the politics of power is not the politics of reality. The method of conflict stands indicted at the judgment bar of historic experience.

If we are fortunate enough to avoid the method of conflict in dealing with the existing tension between West and East, we shall free our energies for the active employment of the method of comprehension as a way-station on the road to cultural co-operation.

#### IV

West and East alike stand to gain from a cultural audit of Occidental and Oriental civilizations. Concern with the civilizations of the East is more than an academic question for Americans. For aside from the world-economics and world-politics aspects of the existing West-East tension, we are forced to face this question: Shall the future of America be dominated by the spiritualism of Eastern civilization or by the materialism of Western civilization? Or shall we seek to effect a merger of the two, achieving spiritual power in the midst of material prosperity? It is, I think, along the latter line that mankind stands to gain most. And this means that Occidentals and Orientals must turn their attention to a cultural audit of their divergent civilizations, and undertake mutually to enrich their selective sense as they attempt a synthesis of the best of both. Only so can we break down the Occident's scepticism of Oriental values and the Orient's scepticism of Occidental values. In the absence of a vital and vibrant adventure in comprehension, the man of the dreamy and sometimes dirty East will remain unconvinced that the clean and commercial West has found the key to the complete life. Difficult as it

may be for us to realize, the Oriental sees in his dreams and in his dirt a bit of divinity he cannot see in our busy and bustling habits, our swift and sanitary civilization.

Western civilization has long been identified, in the popular mind, with the motor type of man, the man who runs oftener than he reads and acts oftener than he thinks, the man who must go outside the frontiers of his own mind and spirit to find either the world of reason or the world of recreation, the man who is externally rich but internally poor.

Eastern civilization has long been identified, in the popular mind, with the meditative type of man, the man who sits and thinks more than he either runs or reads, the man who has brought both the world of reason and the world of recreation within the frontiers of his own mind and spirit, the man who is externally poor but internally rich.

In the evolution of our American social order these two men are competing for our allegiance. We cannot afford to sell out to either. Each has something to contribute to the future. The Eastern ambition for spiritual perfection is undoubtedly a higher aim than the Western ambition for material prosperity, but a study of the Oriental leaves me with a haunting sense that there is something missing in the wisdom of the East. I am afraid the Easterher all too often dodges the facts of life when he should dominate them, running away from the world in order to be good. Does this lead either to the highest goodness or to the highest efficiency? When West and East sit down to the mutual making of a cultural audit, I think the Oriental and the Occidental will come to agreement that it does not.

The brooding Oriental and the bustling Occidental are alike only half-men. If we could only contrive, alike in West and East, to combine in our personalities the qualities of a successful American and the qualities of a saintly

Indian, we might at last master the secret of complete and creative living. The mere fact that materialistic America has more bath tubs than meditative India does not necessarily mean that India has found the only key to the complete and creative life or that America will necessarily be the breeding-ground of a new humanity. Each is fumbling at the gates of life with a half-key. It is all right for the Indian to bathe in thought, but the American

might be an even better man if he would only think in his bath.

The existing tension between Western civilization and Eastern civilization challenges the citizens of both to develop personalities with a double genius for the spiritual and for the practical. And I am happy to share in the inauguration of a society that is dedicated to the method of comprehension rather than the method of conflict in facing this issue.

## THE UPANISADIC VIEW OF TRUTH

BY DR. MAHENDRANATH SIRCAR, M.A., PH.D.

(Continued from the last issue)

### BEING AND BLISS

Delight is the soul of Being. "Brahman is Anandam," the text says (Taittiriya II, 7). Spirit is delight, and delight is spirit. There is no difference between the two, nor is a difference conceivable. And corresponding to spiritual transcendence and spiritual expression, delight has two forms : the delight of quiet and the delight of expression.

The delight of quiet is delight-in-itself, not enjoyable, nor ever enjoyed. Still it is delight, for delight is being, and where being is the essence, delight is *in excelsis*.

Such delight in transcendence is accepted as calm and refused as delight. This is a common mistake. Delight is not unoften identified with a psychological state, and even in spiritual life the psychological sense or feeling is sought to be multiplied and intensified. Delight in spiritual life is, therefore, supposed to be the heightening of feeling. Such, however, is not the delight felt in transcendence. Still it is delight, and though it has not the warmth of feeling, it has the joy of an unbounded expanse. It is not the delight of a free flow of spiritual dynamism, the ease of a fluid and elastic being, it is the delight of a luminous consciousness and transparent being which is beyond the touch of spatial expansion. It is not the delight of spiritual experiences, it is the delight of

spiritual being. Though it has not the vibrative blessedness of love, it has the blissful repose in itself. It is not the joy of life, it is the joy of freedom.

Anandam has the highest spiritual value and is the index of value in spiritual consciousness and is not unoften set as the value-concept. Felicity is sought. Felicity is realised. Such is the case in spiritual life. But the Upanisads say : "Felicity is Being" (Taittiriya III, 6). Felicity is the essence of the soul. It is not a value-concept, it is the concept of existence. Where being is complete, felicity is full. It is not to be realised, it is there. It is not in fruition. It is not to be, but eternally so. Anandam is then not the value of being, it is being. This delight does not delight itself. It is delight, but not self-delight. It is the delight without rise or fall, it is bliss without ebb and flow.

As such it stands different from the delight of expression or concentration, either analytic or synthetic, though no doubt the spiritual life in immanence feeds upon such delight. This is the plane where delight meets delight,—the joy of enjoying delight, and not the joy of being delight. When the self moves in the world of becoming and relativity, it sees not the delight in the self, it seeks the delight in the other, the other in the self. This reciprocity meets us in the order of expression, and such delight of



reciprocity is to be distinguished from the delight of being. The former is essentially an elevation in psychological consciousness, the latter, a fixity in being. The Taittiriya lays special stress on the transcendence of bliss. "Speech turns back from it, mind cannot attain it. He fears not at any time, who knows the bliss of Brahman."

The former is well indicated in Taittiriya Sruti, i.e., it is the juice of life, the nectar of the soul, and he becomes suffused in gladness who is filled with it (II, 7). The psychological consciousness, no doubt, awaits a consummation, but this consummation is still an opening in the fine sensibility and fine shades of being, and not the delight which awaits on the transcendental awakening. But this distinction is thin, for bliss or delight is initial expression, for the being is bliss, and the first contradiction must be the multiplication of bliss. And, therefore, the text reads after two lines: "Who could have breathed, but for this ether of bliss?" The delight in expression is the delight in festivity, it is the delight of delight embracing itself.

The delight of expression is the delight in the widest commonalty in every fibre of being, manifested and unmanifested. But even in this wide distribution of bliss, the Upanisad conceives higher and lower stages in proportion to the assimilation of wide or restricted bliss in life. Life moves in bliss; and the move of life is merely rhythmical where bliss is more profound and expansive. Men, nature's gods, the creative deities cannot enjoy the life of bliss in its completeness. They live by its touch. Their being is confined, naturally they cannot enjoy the rarest privilege of unbounded delight.

The hierarchy of beings is determined by the possibility of more elastic life in bliss. Bliss is life; the more the bliss, the more the life and the greater the privilege. This scheme pervades from the smallest to the highest existence. The Taittiriya and the Brihadâraṇyaka bear testimony to the scheme of distri-

bution of bliss in the different grades of being. The higher assimilates the bliss of the lower and contains still more. In this way we reach the highest.

The text runs thus:

"A hundred human blisses are one bliss of the human Gandharvas (genii)—also of a man who is versed in the scriptures (śrōtriya) and who is not smitten with desire.

"A hundred blisses of the human Gandharva are one bliss of the divine Gandharvas—also of a man who is versed in the scriptures and who is not smitten with desire.

"A hundred blisses of the divine Gandharvas are one bliss of the fathers in their long-enduring world—also of a man who is versed in the scriptures and who is not smitten with desire.

"A hundred blisses of the fathers in their long-enduring world are one bliss of the gods who are born so by birth (âjânâja)—also of a man who is versed in the scriptures and who is not smitten with desire.

"A hundred blisses of the gods who are born so by birth are one bliss of the gods who are gods by work (karma-deva) who go to the gods by work—also of a man who is versed in the scriptures and who is not smitten with desire.

"A hundred blisses of the gods who are gods by work are one bliss of the gods—also of a man who is versed in the scriptures and who is not smitten with desire.

"A hundred blisses of the gods are one bliss of Indra—also of a man who is versed in the scriptures and who is not smitten with desire.

"A hundred blisses of Indra are one bliss of Brihaspati—also of a man who is versed in the scriptures and who is not smitten with desire.

"A hundred blisses of Brihaspati are one bliss of Prajâpati—also of a man who is versed in the scriptures and who is not smitten with desire.

"A hundred blisses of Prajâpati are one bliss of Brahman—also of a man who is versed in the scriptures and who is not smitten with desire."

In Brihadâranyaka we have the conception of the hierarchy of bliss :

“ ‘If one is fortunate among men and wealthy, lord over others, best provided with all human enjoyments, that is the highest bliss of men. Now a hundred-fold the bliss of men is one bliss of those who have won the fathers’ world. Now a hundredfold the bliss of those who have won the fathers’ world, is one bliss in the Gandharva-world. A hundred-fold the bliss in the Gandharva-world is one bliss of the gods who gain their divinity by meritorious works. A hundredfold the bliss of the gods by works is one bliss of the gods by birth and of him who is learned in the Vedas, who is without crookedness, and who is free from desire. A hundredfold the bliss of the gods by birth is one bliss in the Prajâpati-world and of him who is learned in the Vedas, who is without crookedness, and who is free from desire. A hundredfold the bliss in the Prajâpati-world is one bliss in the Brahâmâ-world and of him who is learned in the Vedas, who is without crookedness, and who is free from desire. This truly is the highest world. This is the Brahâmâ-world, O King !’ Thus spoke Yâjñavalkya.”

Delight of rhythm is to be distinguished from the delight of transcendence. The delight of rhythm is the delight of life, and the whole creation enjoys this kind of delight, it is inherent in its constitution, and none can live without it. Life is delight, for life is rhythm, the more the harmony, the easier the flow of life and this rhythm does not exist in even proportion everywhere. Where the rhythm is the highest, the delight is the greatest. Life and more life is the prayer that goes out from men and gods, for life is rhythm, and rhythmic existence is the felicitous existence. The rhythm of life is cosmic and the cosmic rhythm is distributed amongst individuals according to their capacity and power. Cosmic joy in individual life is, therefore, the reflection of the cosmic rhythm. Where the life’s dance is the most intensive and extensive, there the

joy is the greatest, and the Taittiriya and the Brihadâranyaka most probably mean this apportionment of the cosmic rhythm to the gods and men, when they are representing a hierarchy of the beings, men, creative and preservative gods. The delight of the collective men is focussed in the gods, for they feel the greater rhythm of life. The greater the rhythm, the finer and the wider the delight, and the rhythm may be intensive enough to feel the cosmic life in the inward and outward urges.

But the delight of rhythm is essentially the delight of life, it cannot be the delight of expanse, for however intensive and exclusive the urge may be, it is still limited in its being. It may be life and eternal life, but it is feeling the pulse of life in expression. It has then the limitation of expression. It is lived and enjoyed, it is the delight of life. The delight of being (Atman) is the delight of an awakening from the urge and rhythm of life. Urge is the index of limitation, it is the sign of concentration. However vast and expansive be its influence, it cannot be the plenum of existence, and as such the Chhândogya truly says that in the expanse of being, no experience is possible of it, no urge is felt in it. This expanse has been called delight by Sanatkumâra. It is an expanse without the oscillation of life, it is an expanse which can be lived but not felt. It is the expanse whence disappear the waves of life, the urges of cosmic consciousness and feeling. It is the expanse of undivided bliss, the bliss of calm and not the bliss of life. The bliss of life is the joy of rhythmic dance which widens our sympathies and enlarges our visions, and can give expression to the finest currents of the soul. And a few can stand indifferent to the intoxication of life and welcome the silence beyond. Religious attraction is often the attraction for the subtle delight of life, and the more life is freed from grossness and its restrictions, the more it becomes the source of pure delight. The joys become almost overwhelming when life reveals its unfathom-

able depths and its finest currents. The more it is enjoyed, the more unceasing becomes the attraction.

But such intensive attraction of life ceases to be effective in the transcendent calm, when the soul becomes completely freed from its intoxication. The joy of life cannot compare to the dignity of silence. Life has ebb and flow. Calm is life without ripple, without ebb and flow. It is the plenitude of existence.

Spiritual life in academy and parlour is so often identified with the finest dynamism of our being that the calm in spiritual life as distinguished from its rhythm is not seriously taken into consideration and this probably has been the cause of confounding the silence of spiritual life with void. It is not void, it is the *Pleroma of Eternal Light*, as the Gnostics call it. The urge of life is so insistent and so attractive that the seeker experiences difficulty to get beyond the urges and appreciate the illumined silence. This pleroma of eternal light is to be distinguished from the radiating effulgence which the seeker feels in the dynamic being when the rhythmic oscillation of life is at its highest. The rhythmic oscillation produces an apparent calmness in the dynamic being and is very often accompanied by an all-pervading transparent orb of light. This orb of light is perpetual in Isvara, but transient in man; for in the one case the finest dynamism exists in the state of an apparent equilibrium and in another it is in a state of unstable and disturbed equilibrium. The undisturbed rhythm of life is always associated with the finest transparency of dynamic being and the widest form of expression. A stage, it will be made clear later on, is reached where the light shines eternally, without the veil of ignorance prevalent in man. The former is the genial light of the dynamic divinity, but not the light of silence. The divine light is the orb of light in unbounded space, the light of silence is the light beyond space, the limitless space. This is the light of Atman.

The present-day mysticism seems to

be so much appreciative of life and rhythm, probably as the inevitable after-effect of the devitalising World War, that it cannot rise above the melody and the music of life and welcome the silence beyond profounder urges and meanings of life. Count Keyserling appraises the value of the basic tones of the melody of life in its eternal process of change. "It is the eternal truth which ensouls all temporal sense-formations just as it is eternal life which animates every life." "The ultimate terminus, undefinable as such, the Logos-side of which I call 'adjustment', is nothing else than Life itself. For it is life which gives its content a meaning." Keyserling has shown sympathetic appreciation of the Indian spirit of rising above 'name' and 'form' as necessary to the apprehension of truth (p. 194, *Creative Understanding*), and (in page 196) he says: "The East recognises as a self-evident fact that spiritual light—as is true, ultimately of all life—can only come from a Beyond of the plane of formations." This 'beyond' is the life above all concrete formations.

So deep is the conviction in life, that it is indeed very difficult to raise our vision from the fluidity it promises to the appreciation of the affirmation of the ancients that the Beyond transcends life, transcends formations and expressions. The mystic urge is generally the urge of finer life. The finer the rhythm felt in the dance of life, the greater the attraction felt to life, and the mystic vision has the possibility of being clouded by and fixed upon the dance of life: in fact, it may not get over the conception of life as the basic reality. So great may be the hold of life, that in our aspiration to rise above its concrete expressions in the details of existence, we may read finer values and deeper appreciations into them in reference to their cosmic setting, in their profounder sense-consciousness. We may thus live in the Beyond while holding on still to the immediate.

Almost akin to the appreciation of

life, mysticism by another writer has been identified with *the contemplation of value*. "One day life will emerge, and warmed by the Sun of Pure Being, will come to rest in the contemplation of value which the mystics have called the vision of God. . . . There are the mystics who achieve in sudden flashes of illumination the vision of the world of value which will one day, if evolution goes aright, be the privilege of all things that are living." "This intimation logically involves, and in practice includes, the conviction that life is purposive, in the sense that it is trying to develop a clearer and fuller apprehension of what is now but imperfectly felt and, for some of us, a recognition of the fact that in the mystic this clearer and fuller apprehension has intermittently been achieved." (C. E. M. Joad : *The Present and Future of Religion*, p. 193). Joad conceives a spiritual world in addition to the everyday material world : "The latter is the world of struggle, change and imperfection, the former is the world of permanence, perfection and changelessness." Life evolves to a fuller and more continuous knowledge of this world. The mystic world, to Joad, is the world of absolute and permanent values which can be apprehended but cannot be created by us.

Keyserling's vision of the Life Beyond and Joad's vision of the order of values as the end of the quest do not fall in with the Upanisadic ideal. None of them have been able to rise above the basic conception of life and life in its basic being is associated with permanent values. The vision of a Beyond and a Beyond deep with meaning and expressed in values, is the vision of the causal and the subtle beyond the physical. It is the revelation of the mysteries lying deep behind the division of life on the physical plane, it is continuous with our present experiences which are in effect expressions of them. Joad seems to have been captivated by the fine turns of life in the rarefied consciousness of mystics, and his imagination is struck

by the transcendent world of values as offering the blessed contrast of order, peace and perfection to the disorder, confusion and conflict of the divided life.

Be it transcendent life or value, the mystical ideal cannot confine itself to 'the identification of the object of mystical experience with the transcendent world of values.' The mystic search is after the one, after that beyond which nothing exists, without which nothing exists and that which is the essence of our being, which saves us from the insurgent demands of a restricted self. The great promise of mysticism is, therefore, this felicitation of an emancipation from the inrush of the vital demands of a divided life. The emancipation is certainly different from the values and ideals that lie hidden in life and find expression in the order of finer existence and get appreciation in a truer vision. We shall see that the Upanisads are alive to the finer order of values and show insight into life beyond, but its finest contribution to mysticism is that it seeks to present the ineffable one, as beyond values, beyond life, the spring of all existence, yet the intangible reality which none can divine, a wonder to gods and men, the bliss of existence.

In the delight of rhythm, life enjoys a freedom from discord inevitable to the conflict inherent in the surge of impulses. Rhythm gives us delight because it offers a relief and a deliverance from the discord and therefore presents the aspect of life which is not usually experienced. No doubt life has in every stage of its expression some degree of rhythm, the discord is possible because we have not the life in the fullest. Life is rhythm, and the more we have it, the more we enjoy the joy of rhythm.

Be it noted here that the joy of rhythm is more apparent in the cosmic than in the individual life, for in the cosmic being life has its fullest possible expression without the least possible discord. The more the dance of life is rhythmic, the more it is freed from the anxieties of life, from the hopes and the fears. It enjoys the evenness ; but this

evenness is felt where the oscillation of life is free from the claims of the divided life. It is in a sense a recovery from the battle field of desires, from the vital and mental urges. It is enjoying the dance inherent in life itself. The freedom from the waves of impulses is a freedom from the desires natural to vital and mental life. This freedom is the enjoyment of the wider life, stimulating and inspiring us in every moment of our existence. Its rhythm is deep, its delight pure, its harmony musical. It is the joy of life which the adept alone can feel.

It appears more delightful only because it secures a relief from the stirring and stressing of the surface life. It is as it were a temporary forgetfulness of the insistent demands connected with our vital existence. The more life converges towards the fulfilment of want, the more it is restricted to a plane of existence where it cannot feel itself at its highest and enjoy the blessing of a forgetfulness and escape from the limited urges of expression. The higher urge of life has a freedom from this constant tension of a concentrated purpose. Life is enjoyed most in its elasticity, and the more free it is from limited visions, the more is the possibility of enjoying the wider and deeper currents of the soul.

The finer appreciation of life, therefore, always requires greater freedom from its limited urges. This truth is seen by C. E. M. Joad. He sees in æsthetic experience a freedom and release from the constant urges of life and a momentary forgetfulness of the claims and interests of life. Joad says : "We who are part and parcel of the evolutionary stream stand for the time outside and above the stream, and are permitted for a moment to be withdrawn from the thrust and play of impulse and desire . . . for so long as we enjoy the vision of the end, life leads us alone. We feel neither need nor want, and losing ourselves in contemplation of the reality beyond us we become for the moment selfless." Joad has almost the true appreciation of the

mystic consciousness as chiefly self-forgetfulness. In other words, it implies the transcendence over the surface ripple of life, but he seems not to be quite alive to the delight of silence. The finer rhythm may give us a freedom from the persistent claims and counter-claims of desires, life may be tasted with its full cup of delight in its serene melody and absorbing harmony. The riotous claims may be hushed in the silence where the original music of life may enrapture the soul and flashes of light may overcome it with the rich experience of the sublimities and beauties of the cosmic life. The strength and vigour of the cosmic self may stir our being to its very depth. Still such a mystic consciousness has not the full expression and unique presentation of the transcendent. The forgetfulness of our confined experience and the enjoyment of the dance of cosmic life meet us on the pathway to the realisation of the silence of the beyond, but they should not be confounded with the true appreciation of the mystic consummation. The order of æsthetic beauty and moral value with their possibilities cannot compare to the delight of silence. A persistent demand there is to rise from the discords into the harmony of life, but this music of life is not the finality in the mystic exaltation. The Upanisadic seers have the final appreciation of the calm beyond the waves of life, of the great beyond in which silence reigns supreme. It is indeed a terrible experience for those who are anxious to enjoy the dance of life and who have not the boldness to go further. The mystic silence is a unique experience beyond all descriptions in the terms of concrete experience. Life here is hushed into silence, experience vanishes into nothing, the dream of life for ever dwindles away, the cosmic dance comes to a close, the joy of fellowship in an eternal fraternity evaporates for ever. Life is awakened from the fatal division which for ever binds it. Silence reigns supreme. The final delight is this delight of

silence. Gods, archangels, angels and men do not know it; knowing it they cannot exist. It is the eternal wonder, the everlasting Yea behind all existence, the ether of consciousness, the eternal

background, the ever-present Now, the stay of all, but the ever inaccessible, the ever impenetrable, the eternal mystery that always attracts but always eludes our grasp.

(Concluded)

## SWAMI BRAHMANANDA THE SPIRITUAL SON OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

BY SWAMI SATPRAKASHANANDA

(Continued from the last issue)

From Puri he visited Madras for the first time in October, 1908, on an invitation from Swami Ramakrishnananda, who came all the way from Madras to escort him. Sister Devamata of America, who had come to India to hold communion with the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, was then living in Madras in a rented house close to the Math. During the Maharaj's stay at Madras the Sister served him with whole-hearted love and devotion. The Maharaj also treated her with kind and affectionate regards and often enquired of her about the American work, and specially about Swami Paramananda who had gone there recently. While at Madras, the Maharaj is said to have passed into *Samādhi* (superconscious state) one evening at the time of *ārati* (vesper service). Of this the Sister has given the following account in her *Days in an Indian Monastery*:

"He sat on the rug at the far end of the hall away from the door of the shrine, his body motionless, his eyes closed, a smile of ecstasy playing about his lips. Swami Ramakrishnananda was the first to observe that he did not move when the Service was over. . . . For half an hour no one stirred—a boy who was crossing the hall did not even draw back his foot. Perfect stillness pervaded the monastery—a radiant, pulsing stillness. Then Swami Brahmananda opened his eyes, looked around in dazed embarrassment, got up from his

seat, went silently to his room and was not seen again that evening."

Before he came to Madras there was no proper arrangement in the Madras Math for the ceremonial performance of the evening service. It was the Maharaj who introduced it there. And every evening after the service, he would hold an assembly of devotees in which scriptures were studied and devotional songs were sung. The Maharaj himself also would play on musical instruments in accompaniment.

In December next he went on a pilgrimage to Rameswar accompanied by Swami Ramakrishnananda, Swami Dhirananda, Swami Vishuddhananda, Swami Ambikananda and C. Ramaswami Aiyangar. On reaching the sacred spot, the Maharaj went straight to the temple from the railway station and worshipped Sri Rāmeswara. The Maharaj and the party stayed there nearly a week in a bungalow belonging to the Raja of Ramnad. Many an inhabitant of the place came to seek his instruction and blessings. The Maharaj received them all with utmost kindness and love. On his way back to Madras he stopped at Madura to worship the Goddess Minākshi there. Here the Maharaj had a wonderful spiritual experience which beggars description. He realised the living presence of the Mother in the Temple. As he was escorted to the *sanctum sanctorum*, he stood before the image firm and motionless gazing at the

lotus-feet of the Goddess. Soon his whole body began to tremble in ecstasy. Tears trickled down his cheeks. The attendants stood round his person to prevent a fall. This spiritual mood lasted nearly an hour after which the Maharaj gradually came down to the plane of normal consciousness. He spent a couple of days at Madura visiting notable historical places. Thence he returned to Madras direct.

In January, 1909, the Maharaj went to Bangalore to open the new Ashrama there. This time Sister Devamata also joined the party. The elite of the town including the officials of the Mysore State attended the opening ceremony. They all assembled under a Durbar Samiana set up for the occasion. Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao, C.I.E., the then Dewan of the Mysore State, made over the key of the Ashrama to the Maharaj on behalf of the public with a nice little speech, to which the Maharaj gave a suitable reply. It was on this occasion that the Maharaj spoke before the public for the first and last time. The speech lasted only fifteen minutes, but it made an excellent impression on the audience. Though he generally felt very shy in a function which had a public character, this time he stood like a rock, as he humorously said to some of us afterwards.

After a week's stay at Bangalore, he returned to Madras. In March next he went to Conjeevaram and remained there for three or four days. He worshipped the Goddess Kāmākshi and visited the temple several times during his short stay there. He also visited Shiva Kanchi and Vishnu Kanchi. He was much charmed with the sanctity of the place and the beauty of the images. The Maharaj left for Puri towards the end of April. He very much enjoyed his sojourn at Madras. Many of its residents approached him for religious instruction. Justices Krishnaswami Aiyar and Sundaram Iyer and other leading men came to pay their respects to him. At Madras he heard for the first time the *Rāma-nāma* chant of Southern India and

was much fascinated by it. It at once struck him that it could be set to a more melodious tune and sung by the monks of the Order in congregation as a form of devotional practice. Since then *Rāma-nāma Sankirtana* has been introduced into the Ramakrishna Math and its branches. Now it is sung in almost all the centres of the Order once a fortnight. In Bengal it has been adopted by some other religious societies as well.

Towards the last part of April, 1910, the Maharaj visited Benares for a fortnight. The occasion was the opening of the first permanent buildings of the Sevashrama there. He had, in the April of 1908, laid the foundation-stones of two of the Sevashrama buildings. At that time he had stayed at Benares for about a month. The buildings were now completed and the workers of the Sevashrama eagerly invited the Maharaj to come to Benares and formally open them. At first he refused—he was not doing well. But one of the workers went to the Belur Math where he was then staying and persuaded him to come. He went accompanied by several monastic and lay devotees. On an auspicious day, special ceremonies were performed and the buildings declared open. There was music by one of the celebrated musicians of the day, and all felt a great spiritual joy sweeping over them. The Maharaj himself looked absorbed in a deep blissful mood and blessed all from the bottom of his heart. The occasion has left an indelible impression on all who were present. After two weeks he returned to Belur.

Early in 1911 Swami Turiyananda returned to the Math after about nine years' secluded life of strenuous *tapasyā*. He went to Puri and lived with the Maharaj for some time. They came back to the Math in the latter part of the year. In April of 1912 the Maharaj left for Kankhal accompanied by Swami Turiyananda and Swami Shivananda. They stayed there at the Sevashrama for about six months. At the instance of the Maharaj, the worship of the

Goddess Durgā, the typical *pujā* of Bengal, was celebrated in the Sevashrama. The image of the Goddess measuring about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  cubits had to be conveyed there all the way from Calcutta under the personal care of a lay devotee. A considerable number of local *Sādhus* were sumptuously fed on the occasion. At Kankhal some of the young members of the Order met in his room almost every evening. The Maharaj spoke to them most fervently of devotion to God, glory of renunciation and the responsibilities of monastic life, and repeatedly urged them to make strenuous efforts for the realisation of their life's ideal. Sometimes they sat in meditation before him till late at night. While at Kankhal, he had once to go to Roorkee for the registration of a deed relating to the Ramakrishna Mission Orphanage at Sargachi, Murshidabad, for which Swami Akhandananda, the founder-president of the Orphanage, had come to him.

From Kankhal the Maharaj came to Benares late in autumn. Swami Shivananda and Swami Turiyananda were also with him. They had not stopped at Benares on their way up. The Maharaj was accommodated in the Sevashrama building. The Holy Mother had already come to Benares and was living in a house close by. The Maharaj joyfully attended the *Kālī Pujā* and the *Jagaddhātri Pujā* performed at the Advaita Ashrama. A number of lay devotees and monks of the Order assembled in the holy city from different places to attend the *pujās* and to have the blessing of their company. An ineffable joy and peace reigned in the hearts of all. The Hindustani opera *Rāma-līlā* and the *Rāsa-līlā* of Sri Krishna were also performed in the Ashrama. The *Rāma-nāma* chant of Southern India mentioned above was introduced at Benares centre at this time. One evening while listening to the *Rāma-nāma Sankirtana* in the Sevashrama Hall, the Maharaj had a vision of Mahavir, the ideal devotee of Sri Ramachandra. The opening invocations had

just begun, when an old man was seen entering the place slowly. He took his seat beside the portrait of Sri Ramachandra before which the *Sankirtana* was being held. The Maharaj looked at him twice or thrice, as he had never seen him before. After a few minutes, he was seen no more. Then the Maharaj realised that he had seen Mahavir who comes wherever the name of Rama is sung. Tulsidas, a great saint and devotee of Sri Ramachandra, also had a similar vision.

The following incident which happened in Benares exhibits the Maharaj's great devotion to the Holy Mother and the highly developed *sāttvika* character of his person: One day he with his *Gurubhāis* and some other monks of the Ashrama were invited by the Holy Mother to a noonday meal. On his return from the Mother's place, he had a severe attack of diarrhoea. He was given medicine, but it did him no good. Towards evening he refused to take medicine, but wanted to drink water sanctified by the touch of the Holy Mother as the only remedy. This was given him. At night he felt better. In the morning he was all right. He took his usual diet with the Holy Mother's permission, though the doctors had prescribed lighter food. On the previous night the Holy Mother had a vision in which Sri Ramakrishna appeared to her and said that Rakhal's ailment was due to his taking an article of food which had not been offered to the Divine Mother. It did not agree with the *sāttvika* nature of his physique.

The Maharaj returned to Belur at the end of winter some time before the birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna. In the next autumn, i.e., of 1913, he again went to Benares at the special request of Babu Navagopal Ghose's wife, a favourite lady-disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, to attend the *pujā* of the Goddess Durgā to be celebrated by her at the Benares Advaita Ashrama. From Benares he once visited Ayodhya. With great devotion he went round the places associated with the divine life of



Sri Ramachandra. At one or two of them he is said to have passed into trance. At his instance the *Râma-nâma* chant was performed with great fervour in the celebrated temple of Mahavir called Hanumangarh. The summer of 1914 he passed in Benares. He had no intention to return to the Math at Belur soon. He went to Allahabad and had a mind to go to Brindaban and stay there long. But Swami Premananda who was in charge of the Belur Monastery, felt his absence so keenly that he came to Allahabad to request him personally to return to the Math. The Maharaj was persuaded to come back for the sake of the young *Sannyâsins* and *Brahmachârins*, in whose name specially Swami Premananda had made the request. Accordingly he came to Belur in winter.

On his arrival at Belur, a great enthusiasm prevailed among the inmates of the Math. He looked particularly after the physical and spiritual welfare of the young members and personally enquired if they had grievance or inconvenience of any sort. They often assembled before him and asked him questions. The Maharaj gladly solved their doubts and difficulties. For some time they also enjoyed the blessed privilege of meeting in his room and practising meditation in his presence every morning. After the meditation sacred songs and hymns were chanted.

In the summer of 1915 he went to Bhadrak in the District of Balasore in Orissa. About the middle of the year Swami Saradananda and Swami Suddhananda came to Bhadrak from Puri to consult him on certain matters relating to Mayavati Advaita Ashrama. Here also a number of friends and devotees gathered round him. They met every evening to discuss with him religion and various other topics. His loving nature and gentle and polite behaviour had endeared him to all. A weekly sitting was organised for *Bhajana* in which Swami Suddhananda was asked by the Maharaj to read the *Gîtâ*. The Maharaj returned to the Math towards the end of the year.

Whenever the Maharaj was at the headquarters at Belur, he aimed particularly at the spiritual development of the *Sannyâsins* and the *Brahmachârins* of the Math. Not only did he enforce strict rules for the regular practice of meditation, but urged them with the fire of his soul to struggle hard to realise the truth. His inspiring presence and stirring words had such an elevating influence on them that their minds naturally rested on the thought of God and could be fixed on Him without much effort. The following record from the diary of a monk gives a glimpse of the Maharaj as a trainer and awakener of souls in these days :

"It is winter, December, 1915,—a few days before the Christmas. The Maharaj, Baburam Maharaj (Swami Premananda), Mahapurushji (Swami Shivananda), Khoka Maharaj (Swami Subodhananda) and many other *Sannyâsins* and *Brahmachârins* are at present residing in the Math. Nowadays the Maharaj has made a rule that all *Sâdhus* and *Brahmachârins* should rise at 4 o'clock in the morning and should sit for meditation and *Japa* by 4-30 a.m. Some practise meditation in the worship-room, some in the Maharaj's room which is on the first floor, others in the verandah facing the Ganges and adjoining the Maharaj's room. A monastic attendant of the Maharaj has been entrusted with the duty of ringing a bell at ten minutes to 4 o'clock. The Maharaj gets up either at 3 o'clock or at quarter to three. His sleep is very short. After practising meditation for two to two hours and a half, all assemble in his room by 7 a.m. and sing devotional songs for about an hour and a half.

"The Maharaj gives instructions to all. It is not mere giving of instruction but the transmission of spiritual powers. He raises the mind of each six or seven steps up. After hearing him, as they come downstairs they speak to one another of their experience of the Maharaj's supernal power, and most of them say that they have never experienced such manifestation of the Maharaj's power

before, nay, they have not noticed similar expression of power in any other Maharaj. One of the *Brahmachârin*s, who has been writing a diary of the Math for some days, was also present in the Maharaj's room one morning. That day his mind soared so high that he could not fix his attention on the Maharaj's language, though he tried to do so. . . ."

In January, 1916, the Maharaj went to Dacca with Swami Premananda and a few other monks of the Order at the request of the local devotees to lay the foundation-stones of the Dacca Ramakrishna Math and Mission in the newly acquired permanent site, which was the generous gift of a premier zeminder of the place. *En route* they visited the holy temple of Kâmâkhyâ at Gauhati. Thence they came to Mymensingh where they stopped only a few days. On their arrival at Dacca a great enthusiasm prevailed in this old historic city of East Bengal. A large number of young students and persons of light and leading came to them daily for instructions and blessings. People from distant villages flocked to their blessed presence. A considerable number of lady devotees also had the privilege to see them. From Dacca the Maharaj and party made a short trip to Kashimpur at the special request of a bereaved zeminder of the place, who had donated a large sum of money to erect a building in the Dacca Mission in memory of his deceased son. Besides the notable temples and other places of interest of the city, the Maharaj, accompanied by Swami Premananda, visited the hermitage of the saint Bijoykrishna Goswami. They also went to Deobhog near Naraingunge to see the house where the saint Durgacharan Nag had lived. They were much impressed with the rural beauty and the sanctity of the place.

After a month's stay at Dacca the Maharaj and party returned to Belur in the beginning of February. In July next he went to Madras on a second visit and stayed there about a month.

Then he proceeded to Bangalore. From Bangalore he went to Trivandrum to lay the foundation-stone of the Trivandrum Math. Thence he made a pilgrimage to Cape Comorin with a big party of monastic and lay devotees. He performed a special *pujâ* of the Goddess *Kanyâkumâri* with various offerings. He stayed there about a week in the State Choultry. Every day he used to sit in meditation in the hall before the temple and asked his companions to do the same. On his way back to Bangalore he visited Janardan and several other sacred places. From Bangalore he came back to Madras. Then he went to Srirangam near Trichinopoly to visit the holy temple of Ranganâtha and returned after ten or twelve days. Next he went to Conjeevaram and visited the sacred temples there a second time. He also paid a visit to Perambur, the birthplace of Ramanuja, and came back to Madras the same day. A few days after, he visited the holy temple of Tirupati. Here he had a very strange experience. As he entered the temple, he perceived the place to be presided over by the Devi or the Female Principle while the image installed in the temple was of the Male God. He expressed his feeling to the Swamis who had accompanied him. On a close examination of the sanctuary it appeared to have been originally a Shakti temple, but afterwards converted into Vishnu temple, probably under the influence of Ramanuja. During his stay at Madras he opened the new Math-building and laid the foundation-stone of the Students' Home. He left for Puri in the next summer (1917). While there, he secured a plot of land at Bhubaneswar to establish a new Math there.

He returned to Calcutta with Swami Turiyananda who had met him at Puri, in November of 1917 before the *Kâli Pujâ*. He lived at Balaram Babu's house and the Udbodhan Office alternately in day and at night. In Calcutta he occasionally attended the public meetings arranged by the Vivekananda Society. In April, 1918, Swami Prajna-

nanda, President of Mayavati Advaita Ashrama and editor of *Prabuddha Bharata*, expired at the Udbodhan Office. A few days before his death the Maharaj saw an ominous vision. One day from upstairs he saw two very tall and robust figures standing near the western staircase. They looked manlike but there was a weird and bizarre aspect about them. They disappeared very soon. He saw them once or twice again. The sight made him very anxious. He felt that some evil was imminent. In July next Swami Premananda breathed his last at Balaram Babu's house. The Maharaj who was present at his death-bed was so overpowered with grief that he wept like a child at the loss of his dear brother-disciple.

The construction of the Bhubaneswar Math commenced in 1918 at his personal initiative. The work was conducted absolutely according to his directions. He took a keen and lively interest in the matter. He secured money for it, received regular information of the progress of work and sent necessary instructions to make it a success. The new Math was opened by himself in November, 1919. After a prolonged stay at Bhubaneswar he returned to Belur in the summer of 1920 after the birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna. He attended the annual general meeting of the Mission, which was held shortly after his arrival.

After the passing away of the Holy Mother in July, 1920, he went again to Bhubaneswar. In January, 1921, he visited Benares for the last time accompanied by Swami Saradananda. Swami Turiyananda was then staying at Benares. He had been suffering from slow fever for some two months. After the definite news of the Maharaj's arrival had reached him, he drove in a motor car at dead of night, in spite of the severe winter cold, to escort the Maharaj from Moghal Sarai to Benares. The Maharaj appeared very bright, cheerful and spirited, as he breathed the

sublime spiritual atmosphere of the sacred city. A few days after, many monastic and lay devotees flocked to Benares from far and near to be in his blessed presence. Some had been staying there from before in expectation of his arrival. Most of the members of the Brotherhood met in his room every morning and evening and listened to his stirring words on God-vision, renunciation, *Brahmacharya*, yearning and struggle for truth and similar other subjects. Many put questions to him and the Maharaj gladly solved their doubts and difficulties. He fervently spoke of the holy atmosphere of Benares as very congenial to religious practice. It had, he said, an elevating and inspiring influence which accelerated spiritual growth. Again and again he exhorted all to be up and doing in their struggle for the attainment of the life's ideal—the bliss and peace eternal. The birthday festivals of the Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda and of himself were celebrated with great éclat during his stay there. Many received initiation into *Sannyāsa* and *Brahmacharya* on those occasions. The important sanctuaries of the place were visited by him from time to time. The days passed in constant joy, festivity and divine inspiration. *Rāma-nāma Sankirtana* was chanted one evening in the hermitage of the Saint Tulsidas, one of the greatest devotees of Sri Ramachandra. Another evening *Kālī Kirtana* was performed in the temple of the Goddess Annapurnā. The memory of the sublime atmosphere created on such occasions by his holy and majestic presence will be cherished in the hearts of all who attended them. While at Benares, the Maharaj also settled with extraordinary tactfulness the internal affairs of the Sevashrama which had assumed a complicated aspect.

Early in spring the Maharaj returned to Belur and attended the birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna. Then he set out for Madras with Swami Sharvananda, the then President of the Madras Math, who had been staying

with the Maharaj since his arrival at Benares with a view to take him to Madras. He stopped a few days at Waltair on the way. He found the place very suitable for spiritual practice and spoke highly of the elevating character of its atmosphere. In Madras he opened the main building of the Students' Home and stayed there for about three weeks. He then proceeded to Bangalore and lived there till September. He came back to Madras next autumn, performed the *Durgâ Pujâ* and the *Kâli Pujâ* in images taken down from Calcutta. Then he left for Bhubaneswar before winter.

In January, 1922, the Maharaj returned to the Math from Bhubaneswar accompanied by Swami Shivananda. He attended the Trustees' meeting and that of the Governing Body of the Mission. In the last week of March he was attacked with cholera in Balaram Babu's house, the most favourite haunt of Sri Ramakrishna and his disciples in Calcutta. The best physicians of the city were called in. He was just recovering from cholera, when there was

a sudden relapse of diabetes which he had contracted as early as 1918. On receiving the news of his illness, *Sannyâsins*, *Brahmachârins*, *Bhaktas*, admirers and friends poured in from all quarters in anxious solicitude. The monks nursed him day and night with utmost care, tenderness and devotion. But nothing could avert the inevitable end. He entered into *Mahâsamâdhi* on Monday, the 10th April, 1922, at the age of sixty. On Saturday night he called the monastic members to his bedside, took leave of them and heartily blessed them all with words instinct with the highest wisdom, love, sweetness, hope and encouragement. Then in a mood of ecstasy he gave expression to a vision which revealed to him at the last moments his own spiritual identity as the playmate of Sri Krishna. This mysteriously corroborated Sri Ramakrishna's experience as to his spiritual self before his coming to Dakshineswar,—a vision which had been carefully kept back from him and which we have narrated in the beginning of our article.

(To be continued)

## ASHTAVAKRA SAMHITA

BY SWAMI NITYASWARUPANANDA

न जातु विषयाः केऽपि स्वारामं हर्षयन्त्यमी ।

सल्लकोपल्लवप्रीतमिवेमं निम्बपल्लवाः ॥ ३ ॥

निम्बपल्लवाः Leaves of the *Neem* tree सल्लकोपल्लवप्रीते loving the leaves of the *Sallaki* tree इमे elephant इव as अमी those के अपि any विषयाः objects स्वारामं one delighting in Self जातु at any time न not हर्षयन्ति please.

3. No<sup>1</sup> sense-objects ever please him who delights in Self even as the leaves of the *Neem* tree do not please an elephant who delights in the *Sallaki* leaves.

[<sup>1</sup> No etc.—The objects of the senses lose all their charm for one who has realised the ultimate perennial source of absolute bliss in Self and the nothingness of the sense-objects.]

यस्तु भोगेषु भुक्तेषु न भवत्यधिवासिता ।

अभुक्तेषु निराकाङ्क्षी तादृशो भवदुर्लभः ॥ ४ ॥

यः Who तु (expletive) भुक्तेषु enjoyed भोगेषु in objects of enjoyment अधिवासिता coveter न not भवति is अभुक्तेषु in things not enjoyed निराकाङ्क्षी not desiring ( भवति is च and ) तादृशः such a one भवदुर्लभः rare in the world.

4. Rare in the world is one who does not covet<sup>1</sup> things which he has enjoyed or does not desire things which he has not enjoyed.

[<sup>1</sup> *Covet etc.*—Once we have enjoyed a thing, an impress is left in the mind and that makes us desire for the thing again and again. Only Self-knowledge can rid us of this attraction.]

बुभुक्षुर्हि संसारे मुमुक्षुरपि दृश्यते ।

भोगमोक्षनिराकाङ्क्षी विरलो हि महाशयः ॥ ५ ॥

इह Here संसारे in the world बुभुक्षुः one who desires worldly enjoyments मुमुक्षुः one who desires liberation अपि also दृश्यते is seen भोगमोक्षनिराकाङ्क्षी not desirous of enjoyment or liberation महाशयः the great-souled one हि but विरलः rare.

5. One desirous of worldly enjoyment and one desirous of liberation are both found in this world. But rare is the great-souled one who<sup>1</sup> is not desirous of either enjoyment or liberation.

[<sup>1</sup> *Who etc.*—Even the desire of liberation is imperfection, for it implies the consciousness of bondage. Absolute Knowledge is not yet, so long as this desire is there.]

धर्मार्थकाममोक्षेषु जीविते मरणे तथा ।

कस्याप्युदारचित्तस्य हेयोपादेयता न हि ॥ ६ ॥

कस्य अपि Certain उदारचित्तस्य of a broad-minded person हि indeed धर्मार्थकाममोक्षेषु in Dharma, Artha, Kâma and Moksha तथा as well as जीविते in life मरणे in death ( च and ) हेयोपादेयता sense of the rejectable and the acceptable न not ( चित्ति is )

6. It is only some broad-minded person who has neither attraction nor aversion for Dharma, Artha, Kâma and Moksha as well as life<sup>1</sup> and death.

[<sup>1</sup> *Life etc.*—A man of Self-knowledge is ever conscious of himself as eternal. He has no body-idea. Life and death are meaningless to him.]

वाञ्छा न विश्वविलये न द्वेषस्तस्य च स्थितौ ।

यथा जीविकया तस्मादन्य आस्ते यथासुखम् ॥ ७ ॥

( ज्ञानिनः Of a man of Knowledge ) विश्वविलये in the dissolution of the universe वाञ्छा desire न not तस्य its स्थितौ in existence द्वेषः aversion न not ( चित्ति is च and ) तस्मात् so चत्तः the blessed one यथा जीविकया with whatever living comes of itself यथासुखं happily आस्ते lives.

7. The man of Knowledge does<sup>1</sup> not feel any desire for the dissolution of the universe or aversion for its existence. The blessed<sup>2</sup> one, therefore, lives happily on<sup>3</sup> whatever subsistence comes as a matter of course.

[<sup>1</sup> *Does etc.*—Because he perceives the universe as the Self itself. As long as there is ignorance, one looks upon the world as the root of all his miseries and tries to shun or destroy it so to speak. But with the birth of the Knowledge of the Self, his vision is changed and everything appears as the Self alone.

<sup>2</sup> *Blessed*—Such a person is indeed blessed.

<sup>3</sup> *On etc.*—Because he cannot make any effort for his subsistence owing to his ego having been completely annihilated.]

कृतार्थोऽनेन ज्ञानेनेत्येषं गलितधीः कृती ।

पश्यन् शृण्वन् स्पृशन् जिघ्रसन्नास्ते यथासुखम् ॥ ८ ॥

अनेन This ज्ञानेन by Knowledge कृतार्थः fulfilled इति एवं thus गलितधीः with the mind absorbed कृती contented पश्यन् seeing शृण्वन् hearing स्पृशन् touching जिघ्रन् smelling अन्नम् eating यथासुखं happily आस्ते lives.

8. Being fulfilled by this<sup>1</sup> Knowledge<sup>2</sup> and with his mind<sup>3</sup> absorbed, and contented,<sup>4</sup> the wise one lives happily, seeing,<sup>5</sup> hearing, touching, smelling and eating.

[<sup>1</sup> This—as indicated in the present chapter.

<sup>2</sup> Knowledge—i.e., of the Self.

<sup>3</sup> Mind etc.—The mind is immersed in the glory of Self-Knowledge and its resultant blessings.

<sup>4</sup> Contented—Because nothing remains to be attained.

<sup>5</sup> Seeing etc.—It is not external behaviour that demarcates a man of Knowledge from an ordinary human being. The former may have everything in common with the latter except the feeling of 'I-ness' and 'mine-ness'.]

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

We are glad to be able to reproduce a beautiful picture of Sister Christine (an American disciple of Swami Vivekananda, who passed away shortly in New York) as our frontispiece. . . . The instalment of the *Discourses on Jnana Yoga* by SWAMI VIVEKANANDA, with which the present number opens, concludes this very interesting series. We are, however, glad to assure our readers that they will have a few more pieces of the unpublished utterances of the great Swami. . . . BOSHI SEN who contributes *Sister Christine* in this issue, is at present carrying on researches in plant-physiology in America. He had been long and intimately associated with the Sister whose life and character he sketches in his article, and was with her in her last moments. . . . We have to state that we have included in our article, *Some Fundamentals of Hinduism—I*, a few paragraphs from another article of ours published long ago. . . . *The Diary of a Disciple* is concluded in this issue. But there will be other records of conversations in the next numbers. . . . We invite the special attention of our readers to the

brilliant article, *Civitas Dei—the City of Mankind*, which ROMAIN ROLLAND contributes to the present number. The subject treated in it is of absorbing interest and claims our earnest thought. . . . GLENN FRANK who contributes *The Fruits of Tension*, is the President of Madison University, Wisconsin, U.S.A. and was at one time the editor of *The Century Magazine*, New York. The article was read at the Inaugural Dinner of the New Orient Society in Chicago last April. Readers will note that both M. Rolland and Mr. Frank deal with essentially the same subject in their articles, though their treatments are different. . . . DR. MAHENDRANATH SIRCAR, M.A., PH.D. concludes his *The Upanisadic View of Truth* in this issue.

### WHITMAN AND SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

Apropos of our comment in page 226 (*May Prabuddha Bharata*—article by Romain Rolland : *America at the time of Vivekananda's First Visit*), an American reader has thus written to us : "I am referring to a footnote of yours that appears in the article of Romain Rolland, where you imply that *Leaves of Grass* is 'a mere intellectual

and poetic effusion.' It has always seemed to me that Whitman was a man of some realization, but I should like very much to understand better your point of view if you have time to explain it." We shall in the following lines try to explain our understanding of the spiritual value of Walt Whitman.

M. Rolland takes the view that Whitman had mystic experience. He says: "He (Whitman) immediately perceived, embraced, espoused, and became at one and the same time each distinct object and their mighty totality, the unrolling and the fusion of the whole Cosmos realised in each morsel of the atom, and of life." And he adds: "How does this differ from the point of ecstasy, the most intoxicated Samādhi of a Bhakti-yogin who, reaching in a trice the summit of realisation, and having mastered it, comes down again to use it in all the acts and thoughts of his everyday life?" As has been evident from our footnote, we do not agree with M. Rolland's estimate.

By "realisation," we generally mean God-realisation or states approximating to it. We do not think Whitman realised those states. The Cosmos can be perceived in different ways. It is true that most men do not feel as Whitman did. They are so circumscribed in vision, so narrow! And Whitman had certainly a wonderful genius of absorbing all things. But the question of questions is: In what aspects of those things? Things have different aspects. In one aspect they are spiritual. In other aspects they are material and ideal. How far did Whitman's vision penetrate the heart of things? Did he feel his unity with objects in their spiritual aspect? If not, how can we compare his experience with the most intoxicated Samādhi of a Bhakti-yogin? All Yogas are concerned with the spiritual being of things. That is the essential difference between poetic appreciation and spiritual ecstasy. We have explained in our article this month the psychological implications of high spiritual realisations. Did Whitman

realise the requisite mental condition? Did he succeed in eliminating the multifarious *vrittis* (modifications) of his mind? Could he make his mind "one-pointed" so that only one *vritti* remained in it, call it God or Life or Cosmos? We think he did not. M. Rolland says: "The memoirs of Miss Helen Price (quoted by Bucke: *Whitman*, Pp. 26-31) describe, as an eyewitness, the condition of ecstasy in which he composed some of his poems." This does not tell us much. There are ecstasies and ecstasies. Surely when a poet of the calibre of Whitman writes, there is an uplifting of consciousness. But here again the question arises: How far uplifted? Where are the indications in Whitman that he felt things as spiritual? The glorification of sexuality and animality in his poems does not surely indicate very high spiritual perception. Swami Vivekananda said in course of one of his lectures: "You may take the most learned man you have and ask him to think of spirit as spirit,—he cannot. You may imagine spirit, he may imagine spirit. It is impossible to think of spirit without training. . . . Can you think of spirit as spirit?" This is the real test. We must perceive the spiritual being of things and of our own self. Then only we may be called men of realisation.

But of course, between our normal experience and the states of spiritual realisation, there are stages. And we have no doubt Whitman, and for the matter of that, many other poets and artists, felt things in a light unusual to ordinary minds. What then should our estimation be of Whitman's experience? Swami Vivekananda called him the "*Sannyāsin* of America." In what sense? Surely not in the sense of a man of realisation. The *Sannyāsin* typifies the man of freedom, the wanderer, never held back by social conventions and pettinesses, the comrade of all. We think, it is in this sense that the Swami called Whitman the "*Sannyāsin* of America." It appears

that he did not study Whitman much while he was in America. On his return to India, he requested one of his American disciples to get him a copy of *Leaves of Grass*, and we have, in our Library at the Belur Math, a copy presented to him by Mr. and Mrs. Mills.

Whitman himself has left a detailed account of the condition and preparation of mind when he wrote *Leaves of Grass*. Writing about the sources of his character up to 1860, he says in his *Specimen Days*: "To sum up the foregoing from the outset (and, of course, far, far more unrecorded,) I estimate three leading sources and formative stamps to my own character, now solidified for good or bad, and its subsequent literary and other outgrowth—the maternal nativity-stock brought hither from far-away Netherlands, for one, (doubtless the best)—the subterranean tenacity and central bony structure (obstinacy, wilfulness) which I get from my paternal English elements, for another—and the combination of my Long Island birth-spot, sea-shores, childhood's scenes, absorptions, with teeming Brooklyn and New York—with, I suppose, my experiences afterwards in the secession outbreak, for the third." This third factor in the constitution of his character interests us most, and of that, the element, *absorptions*. That was Whitman's peculiar genius. He absorbed all things and they abound in his book. This reminds us of a letter of the great English poet Keats. In it he speaks of his tendency to feel identified with all whatever he came in contact with, and he calls that the essence of poetic genius. (We regret we cannot quote his exact words). We have already stated our estimation of the value of Whitman's "absorptions." We do not find any indication of these being of the spiritual character.

Let us now see how Whitman himself estimates this. In his *November Boughs* there is a chapter, "A Backward Glance o'er Travel'd Roads," in which he details at length the motives that impelled him to write *Leaves of Grass*. He says: "I consider 'Leaves of Grass'

and its theory experimental." This is a startling statement, to say the least. One who writes down his experiences of the Eternal (and if we are to consider Whitman to be a man of realisation, we must look upon his experiences as set down in his book to be those of the Eternal), cannot talk of 'experiment'. His is the most complete certitude. The same temporal note is differently sounded in the following passage: "I know very well that my 'Leaves' could not possibly have emerged or been fashion'd or completed, from any other era than the latter half of the Nineteenth Century, nor any other land than democratic America, and from the absolute triumph of the National Union arms." There have been poets who have been also men of realisation, such as Kavir, Dadu, etc. They have talked of the Eternal and of the variegated universe. They would never have thought that their poetry was the product of certain times and circumstances. The difference between such poets and Whitman forcibly brings to our mind the quality of the latter's experience—he knew a totality of objects, which was material, vital and superficially mental, but not spiritual. He says: "From another point of view 'Leaves of Grass' is avowedly the song of Sex and Amative-ness, and even Animality—though meanings that do not usually go along with those words are behind all, and will duly emerge; and all are sought to be lifted into a different light and atmosphere. . . . The work must stand or fall with them, as the human body and soul must remain as an entirety." This is not the talk of a man of realisation. He feels the separateness of body and soul, and he has no need to glorify sex and animality.

When we spoke of *Leaves of Grass* as poetic effusions and not actual realisations, we meant no slight to the great work. We are fully conscious of the great worth of poets. It is all a question of relative value. Poetry is great compared with the dull experience of most men. But spiritual experience is far



above poetry and cannot compare with anything.

### AN INDO-CHINESE MOVEMENT

We quote the following from a recent issue of *The Literary Digest*:

Take the best in several religions, and stir them up together, then mix in a heavy measure of patriotism.

Such a recipe seems to have been adopted in Indo-China, where, says a Paris dispatch to the *New York Times*, a mixture of Taoism, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Christianity is playing an important part in the present revolutionary agitation.

French political agents in touch with the native population are reported to believe that "the new religion is being used in a subtle way to arouse the people to rebellion." And this new religion is only four years old, as the writer of the *Times* dispatch informs us:

"Under the mystic leadership of Le Van Trung, former adviser to the French Government and Officer of the Legion of Honor, Cao Daism, as the new cult is called, is making a strong appeal to the more intelligent portions of the population, especially natives employed in government services. From a humble beginning, in 1926, with several hundred adherents, it has grown to be a flourishing religion counting 600,000 enthusiastic supporters and 3,000 priests.

"By permitting converts to continue to accept what they regard as essential in their old beliefs, Cao Daism attempts to combine the best of all the established forms of worship. The new religion is said to be strongly flavored with nationalism, and the members of the cult are taught that by the concentration of their spiritual attention upon the supreme God—Cao Dai—'the independence of Indo-China,' which the gods of older religions failed to preserve, will later be restored."

Little comment is necessary on the above, except that a Westerner's report of such Oriental movements has always

a wrong bias. As for example, the remark that "the new religion is being used in a subtle way to arouse the people to rebellion" has to be taken cautiously. The movement may be purely spiritual with the inevitable effect of an all-round awakening of power in all departments of life,—as it is happening in India. In any case, the item of news supplied by the *Digest* is highly significant, and some of our readers may profitably inquire into the nature and progress of the movement.

### PROF. EINSTEIN ON SCIENCE AND RELIGION

*The Forum* of New York publishes the report of an interesting conversation between Professor Einstein, the famous author of the Theory of Relativity, and two other gentlemen. The topic of conversation was the relations between science and religion. The Professor was asked if people can reasonably ask from science for the spiritual help and inspiration which, according to the questioner, religion seems unable to give them. "How far can modern scientific theory hope to meet this yearning? . . . How far can the body of scientific theory which is now being built up by you and your colleagues be turned into a philosophy which may go some way towards establishing practical ideals of life on the ruins of the religious ideals which have fallen disastrously of late?" To this question the Professor's reply was highly significant.

"A practical philosophy," he said, "would mean a philosophy of conduct. And I do not think that science can teach men to be moral. I do not believe that a moral philosophy can ever be founded on a scientific basis. You could not, for instance, teach men to face death to-morrow in defence of scientific truth. Science has no power of that type over the human spirit. The valuation of life and all its nobler expressions can only come out of the soul's yearning toward its own destiny. Every attempt to reduce ethics to scientific

formulas must fail. Of that I am perfectly convinced. On the other hand, it is undoubtedly true that scientific study of the higher kinds and general interest in scientific theory have great value in leading men toward a worthier valuation of the things of the spirit. But the content of scientific theory itself offers no moral foundation for the personal conduct of life."

He, however, adds: "The intuitive and constructive spiritual faculties must come into play wherever a body of scientific truth is concerned. A body of scientific truth may be built up with the stone and mortar of its own teachings, logically arranged. But to build it up and to understand it, you must bring into play the constructive faculties of the artist. No house can be built with stone and mortar alone. Personally I find it of the highest importance to bring all the various faculties of the understanding into co-operation. By this I mean that our moral longings and tastes, our sense of beauty and religious instincts, are all tributary forces in helping the reasoning faculty toward its highest achievements. It is here that the moral side of our nature comes in—that mysterious inner consecration which Spinoza so often emphasized under the name of *amor intellectualis*. You see, then, that I think you are right in speaking of the moral foundations of science; but you cannot turn it around and speak of the scientific foundations of morality."

Not a very hopeful estimate this of the possibility of having a scientific religion. But can the Professor's judgment be accepted without some examination? The great Professor's point is perhaps that though science may offer knowledge of reality, it does not prescribe the standard by which to evaluate that knowledge. The values cannot be supplied by science. But is not knowledge itself a supreme standard of value? The great difficulty with the modern mind is that it is not ready to follow unflinchingly in the wake of truth and knowledge. It stops short. It takes for

granted that all knowledge cannot be realised in life,—life cannot be moulded according to knowledge. That is a mistake. The human mind has the capacity to pursue knowledge to the last limit and fully identify itself with it. It is because the modern mind is timid (yes, it is timid, very timid in the metaphysical field, in spite of its physical courage) that it halts on the way, and truth and knowledge points one way and life's aspiration another, and it does not know how to reconcile them. Knowledge, so long as it is imperfect and relates only to a part of the reality, seems unconcerned with our personal life and does not indicate the direction in which it should move. But when knowledge becomes all-comprehensive, its wooden objectivity vanishes and it becomes personal in tone and dictates life's ideals. The reason is that existence known as a whole is no dead substance, but is the very Principle of Life and Consciousness, possessing the essence of personality but devoid of its limitations. Let us know what we are and what the universe is. When we find the true nature of the world and soul, we shall find them identical, we shall find that the universe and the individual, as they appear now, are unreal, that the true reality behind them both is eternal, and that man *has* the power to realise it. This is the complete and bold pursuit of knowledge. The *Advaitists* of India did and are doing it. Why should not the whole world?

Of course, two questions at once arise. First, why should we presume that everyone would pursue knowledge? Yes, science cannot compel anyone to do so. But there is an inner compulsion. We can deny all duties except this. The modern world is bold enough to defy all injunctions, but even it cannot defy the claims of knowledge. There is that in us which compels us to follow knowledge. We cannot live content with what we know to be false. We *must* find the truth and follow it. So we say that knowledge itself is a

supreme standard of value. And if that is so, cannot science become the basis of religion? For what is science if not the finding of truth? But of course, it must be admitted that science, to be the basis of religion, must comprehend the whole of reality, physical and supra-physical. No religion can be based on the findings of mere physical science. Science must investigate not only into the world of matter, but also of life and mind. And when the complete knowledge of the triple world has been found, a religion will at once emerge, for our conduct and aspirations must change with the growth of our knowledge of reality,—the two are correlated. But here the second question arises: Has science any possibility of encompassing the entire reality? When a Prof. Einstein denies the possibility of a scientific religion, what he has in mind is that science cannot hope to comprehend the entire reality. He feels that the higher spheres,—life, mind, soul,—must forever remain beyond the jurisdiction of science. Surely the present-day scientific methods—objective test and demonstration—will not apply to the higher life and mind. But we must understand science in a wider sense. It is true that the science of mind and soul must be, truly speaking, only psychology and metaphysics and not science in its proper sense. But psychology and metaphysics may have a basis in the truths discovered by science and may be in conformity with its findings. That there are systems of philosophy and religion, which are arbitrary and unreal, there is no denying. Such philosophies and religions have been shattered by science. But there have been others which have been strengthened by it. But those philosophies and religions are really the extensions of science, of a piece with it. In this way we may have a scientific religion. What is called speculative science is really pointing to the possibility of such a religion. Unless such a possibility can be realised, the future of both science and religion, in the West at least, seems gloomy.

There is a tendency among some Western scholars to allot different spheres to science and religion and demarcate their jurisdictions, and thus resolve the conflict of science and religion. In a sense this is correct. For as we have seen, science in its narrow sense can never expect to investigate the spiritual truths. But if a union is not attempted between the two zones of experience, physical and super-physical, human life will suffer from a division and conflict of interests. All experience must point *one* way,—both science and religion must prompt the same duty to us. Therefore some reconciliation between science and religion is inevitable. Prof. Einstein himself recognises it in a sense. He says: "I think this extraordinary interest which the general public takes in science today, and the place of high importance which it holds in people's minds, is one of the strongest signs of the metaphysical needs of our time. It shows that people have grown tired of materialism, in the popular sense of the term; it shows that they find life empty and that they are looking toward something beyond mere personal interests. This popular interest in scientific theory brings into play the higher spiritual faculties, and anything that does so must be of high importance in the moral betterment of humanity."

The last sentences, as our readers will note, are really a counsel of despair. But they also point to science as a spiritual discipline. That the pursuit of science may be spiritually ennobling has been testified by many. Prof. Einstein himself says: "With me, the sense of beauty in nature and all my artistic leanings have developed hand in hand with the pursuit of science. And I believe without the one, the other is not possible. Certainly in the case of all the really productive minds that I know of, the one has been united with the other. The artistic talents of the men I am thinking of may not always have been consciously developed or formally employed; but these talents

or tastes have always been active in giving urge and direction to the scientific mind. . . . Modern scientific theory is tending toward a sort of transcendental synthesis in which the scientific mind will work in harmony with man's religious instincts and sense of beauty. I agree that the picture of the physical universe presented to us by the theory of modern science is like a great painting or a great piece of music that calls forth the contemplative spirit, which is so marked a characteristic of religious and artistic yearning. . . . For me, the personal worth of scientific knowledge lies, just as Poincaré has said, in the joy of comprehension and not in the possibility of action which it opens up. I am not a European in the sense that I can regard action as an end in itself." Again: "Modern science does

supply the mind with an object of contemplative exaltation. Mankind must exalt itself. *Sursum corda* is always its cry. Every cultural striving, whether it be religious or scientific, touches the core of the inner psyche and aims at freedom from the Ego—not the individual Ego alone, but also the mass Ego of humanity."

Beautiful! But that is only of science as an indirect method of spiritual upliftment. But what about the spiritual *ideal* itself being supplied by science? Einstein gives us no hope. But is the case really so hopeless? As we have seen before, perhaps mankind need not despair. In any case, what is wanted is a comprehensive scheme of life, based on reality and not imaginary, be it the product of science or philosophy and science combined.

## REVIEW

TEMPLE BELLS (READINGS FROM HINDU RELIGIOUS LITERATURE). Edited by A. J. Appasamy, M.A., D.Phil. The Association Press, 5, Russell Street, Calcutta XI+148 pp. Price paper Re. 1-12; cloth Rs. 2-8.

There was a time when Christianity wanted to thrive in this land only by vilifying Hinduism or belittling its saints and sages. These evangelists would find no beauty in Hinduism. Now things seem to have changed to some extent, and one need not get surprised if even orthodox Christians use appreciative terms while speaking of Hinduism.

The present volume was written to meet the demand of a book of selections from the religious literature of India which would enable Christians to understand in some measure the heart of the religious experience of non-Christian India. But the Editor confesses that one cannot understand "the essence of Hinduism merely by reading books about, particularly in a critical spirit." According to him, "If the deeply religious impulses which lie behind the utterances in the sacred books of India are to be grasped by us, those books should be meditated on; they should be taken to the inner chamber in which we quietly face life's questions in the presence of God. . . . The

great passages of any scripture do not yield their inner meaning until they are brooded over slowly and patiently and for a long time." Quite true. The selections have been excellently done, and the book has a very great devotional appeal and contains nothing which might be termed sectarian.

It gives within a short compass many good thoughts embodied in Sanskrit, Hindi, Marathi, Bengali and Tamil literature and contains extracts and utterances from the Vedas, Upanishads, Gita and many saints and poets representing various provinces of India from the very early times to the present day. It has been a wise plan to give in the beginning short sketches of authors and books quoted in the volume. But in them there are a few inaccuracies. As for instance, it is a one-sided view to say that the Gita teaches the worship of God through Bhakti alone. Ramakrishna Paramahansa was born not on 20th February, 1884, but on 18th February, 1836 A.D.

The book has a very attractive get-up and its beauty has been enhanced by fitting illustrations by some well-known artists.

SHAKTI AND SHAKTA. By Sir John Woodroffe. Ganesh and Co., Madras. 724 pp. Price Rs. 12/-.

We are glad to welcome the third edition of this excellent work of the worthy author who has made unprecedented attempt to bring the recondite Tāntrik philosophy of India to the full blaze of modern light. The former editions have been reviewed in *Prabuddha Bharata*. In this new edition, the book has been thoroughly revised and considerably enlarged. Eleven new chapters have been added. Some important additions have been made in the original chapters. The appendices give four lectures of the author in French.

The book is a comprehensive treatment of the principles and practices of Tāntrik worship from the standpoint of Shakti Sādhana, done in a way necessary for the right understanding of the subject by modern intelligence. It will serve as a very helpful introduction to the study of Tāntra Shāstras for the Oriental scholars as well as the English educated Indians. The book is nicely printed and got up. A full index would have made it all the more useful.

**MAHATMA GANDHI: THE MAN AND HIS MISSION.** *G. A. Natesan and Co., Madras. 136+32 pp. Price Re. 1.*

The book popularly describes the life and career of Mahatma Gandhi up to his march to the salt pans of Surat. The social and political conditions of Modern India have been briefly surveyed in connection with the Mahatma's activities. The book also gives an account of the Mahatma's work in South India. Some appreciations of him by highly distinguished persons such as Rabindranath Tagore, Srinivasa Sastri, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Romain Rolland and C. F. Andrews have been appended to the book.

**STORY OF A MIGHTY SOUL OR THE LIFE OF SWAMI HEMRAJ.** *By U. A. Asrani, M.A. Sut Dharam Sabha, Hydera-*

*bad (Sind). 165+XXIV pp. Price Re. 1-8 (cloth).*

The book depicts the growth of a spiritual personality through the common duties of life. Swami Hemraj was born in 1851 of a Mallick family in Multan. He was married at the early age of twelve. For some sixteen years of his life he was a petty clerk in the District Magistrate's Court at Muzaffargarh. But he possessed such spiritual fervour and performed his domestic and office duties so methodically and disinterestedly that he could reserve sufficient time and energy for intense religious study and practice. He is said to have attained spiritual illumination even while in the service. Many came to him for instruction and guidance, till at last he chose to devote himself fully to the service of God. For the rest of his life he lived like a Sannyāsin to all intents and purposes.

His poems and letters written mostly in Urdu and Hindi were published in his lifetime and drew admirers from far and near. He received invitations from many places in the Western Punjab and Sind to deliver lectures and discourses. But he cared more to build the spiritual lives of earnest seekers than to satisfy the curiosity-mongers by platform speeches. He established Satsang Sabhas (religious associations) in many places. The Hindus as well as the Sikhs and Muhammadans were attracted by his personality. He died in 1903.

He was an Advaitist. His instructions were natural, forceful and rational. The book deals especially with the Swami's life and character. Many incidents have been cited to reveal his public and private life. A companion volume is proposed to be published on his teachings and philosophy. The book contains several appendices, giving the English renderings of a few of his poems and sayings, an outline of his travels and a complete list of his works.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, DELHI

The following account and appeal has been received by us from the R. K. Math, Delhi:

A branch of the Ramakrishna Math at Belur near Calcutta, founded by Swami Vivekananda, was started at Delhi, in the month of May, 1927, for the purpose of

preaching a liberal idea of Religion amongst the masses. Since then the Math has been able to do the following:

(1) *Religious Activities:* The Swamis of the Math tried to help the real seekers of truth through religious lectures and discourses arranged in different places. In these three years they have delivered:

- 194 Lectures on Sri Geeta,  
 105 " " Sri Bhagavatam,  
 89 " " Vedic Upanishads,  
 50 " " Yoga Sutras of Patan-  
       jali,  
 16 " " Bhakti Sutras of  
       Narada,  
 18 " " Raja Yoga,  
 129 " " Teachings of Sri Rama-  
       krishna,  
 43 " " Teachings of Swami  
       Vivekananda,

and 70 " " different religious topics,  
 in places, e.g., the Math premises, St. Stephens, Hindu and Lady Hardinge Medical Colleges, Bengali High Schools, Satyanarain Temple, Talkatora Club, Have-lock Square, different Sanatan Dharma Sabhas, and other places of Delhi, New Delhi and Timarpur.

(2) *Anniversaries*: To make religion appealing to the masses, anniversaries in the holy memory of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, the chief inspirer of the Math, and Swami Vivekananda, the originator of the Ramakrishna movement in India, were organised by the Math, and men like Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Mr. M. R. Jayakar, Mr. N. C. Kelkar, Hon'ble late Mr. S. R. Das, Hon'ble Sir Raja Rampal Singh, K.C.S.I. of Kurri Suddhouly, Sir T. Vijay Raghav Acharya, and many other eminent gentlemen took part in these functions. Every year since 1929 a Convention of Religions to foster love and goodwill between different communities was held during Sri Ramakrishna anniversaries, in New Delhi, in the month of March. It is gratifying to note that Mahomedans, Christians, Jains, Sikhs, Aryas, Sanatanis, Vaishnavas and Vedantists took part in these conventions, while learned Parsis, Buddhists, and Brahmos expressed their sympathy with it.

In connection with the latter function thousands of the poor were fed every year.

(8) *A Library*: In May, 1928, a library was started in the Math premises for the facility of those who wished to study Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda literature. To it were also added some other valuable collections. Some periodicals and dailies in English, Hindi, and Bengali were also received regularly.

(4) *Seva Works*: A free dispensary was opened on the road to Jhandewala near Paharganj in a place mostly inhabited by Nakoas, an untouchable class of the Hindu Samaj. The dispensary was kept open twice

every day. If funds are available, the Math will do more work in that direction.

(5) *During Assam Flood*: During Assam Flood, the Math organised a batch of volunteers composed of the boys of Bengali High Schools of Delhi City and New Delhi, and with their aid collected Rs. 620/- and utilised it for the distressed people of Assam.

(6) *Activity in the Punjab*: Swami Sharvananda, the founder of the Delhi Math, visited Simla in June, 1927 to carry on religious propaganda there; his lectures and discourses were very much appreciated there. Then in April, 1930, at the invitation of Sanatan Dharma Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab, he went to Lyalpur, Sargoda and Rawalpindi. The number of lectures that he delivered in these places were 8, 5 and 12 respectively. Lahore, Amritsar, Gujranwala and Multan were also in his programme, but he had to abandon them because of the tense political atmosphere. It is needless to say that wherever he went he made a deep impression, and in many places people were astonished to hear such learned and rational exposition of religion.

*Appeal*: In the above few lines we have given to our friends a short account of the work that we have done. Our further hope lies in our countrymen on whom we look for the maintenance and progress of the works we have undertaken. So any contribution that may come in the shape of subscription, donation, present, or gift will be thankfully accepted and acknowledged by the President, Sri Ramakrishna Math, 995, Garston Road, Delhi.

#### R. K. MISSION FLOOD RELIEF IN ARAKAN (BURMA)

The Secretary of the R. K. Mission has published a report of the extensive relief work done by the Mission in Arakan which was very miserably affected by the disastrous flood that came over it in June, 1929, the area affected being one hundred thousand acres or about seventy miles. Ten to fifteen thousand householders lost everything they possessed and the total extent of damage was estimated to be about twenty lakhs of rupees. On receiving the news of the disaster the R. K. Mission at Rangoon at once sent to Arakan a relief party which commenced their work on the 1st of July, 1929 and continued it for eight months. Four centres were opened comprising 76 villages; and the total number of recipients

was 10,611 persons. The relief consisted mainly of: (I) Distribution of 4,007 bags of rice, along with salt, chillies, *dal* and other necessary food-stuffs; (II) Distribution of 1,491 pieces of cloths (old and new), 295 *loongies*, 186 *engyies* and 2,750 blankets; (III) Distribution of husk and oil cakes for cattle; (IV) Pecuniary help for purchasing

implements for cultivation and hand-loom for weaving; (V) Repair of silted ponds and wells for supply of drinking water; (VI) Building of 1,775 huts; and (VII) Medical Relief to 8,468 people. Besides donations in kind which also covered a large amount, the total receipts amounted to Rs. 52,878-0-9 and the total expenditure to Rs. 51,454-18-6.

### KISHOREGANJ RELIEF

We have received the following appeal from the Secy., R. K. Mission :

Before we had time to finish our relief work at Rohitpur, in Dacca, the cries of distress from the Kishoreganj Sub-division of the Mymensingh District have demanded immediate attention. Readers of newspapers are already aware of the nature of the atrocities committed in this part. The picture of desolation here is the same as at Rohitpur, only on a magnified scale, covering fifty villages. So far as our workers could gather, only Hindu homes were looted, Mahomedan homes being scrupulously spared. The misery entailed by this ruthless plunder—and in some cases slaughter—can be better imagined than described. Only bare houses were standing, with not a vestige of their contents left. The once flourishing bazars told the same sad tale. Everywhere poor and rich Hindus were rendered equally penniless. They were absolutely without the means of procuring their food or of cooking it and had just one piece of cloth.

Seeing this desperate condition we have started a relief centre at Mirzapur, in the Kishoreganj Sub-division, from which since the 1st of August 149 mds. 18 srs. of rice, 501 pieces of cloth and some quantity of utensils have been distributed to the extremely needy families of ten villages. It is the want of adequate funds that has prevented our taking more villages. The help must be continued for at least some weeks more, for the condition as yet is most unstable.

Our work at Rohitpur has been closed. We distributed in the last three weeks 96 mds. 28 srs. of rice, besides some quantity of cloth, utensils, tools and certain other accessories of getting a living.

We gratefully acknowledge receipt of the following amounts among others :—A friend Rs. 1,000. Messrs. Mooljee Sicka & Co., Calcutta, Rs. 1,000. A sympathiser Rs. 450. Dacca Relief Committee Rs. 200. We need substantial contributions yet to carry on the relief work in this area. We appeal with all earnestness to the generous public to help us with funds in aid of the sufferers.

Contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged at the following addresses:—(1) *The President, Ramkrishna Mission, Belur Math P.O., Dt. Howrah.* (2) *The Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 182A, Mukhtaram Babu Street, Calcutta.*

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# Prabuddha Bharata

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

## AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

SAN FRANCISCO,  
May 24, 1900.

*(In answer to a few questions put by Sister Nivedita, Swamiji jotted down the following replies.)*

Q. I cannot remember what parts Prithvi Rai and Chand disguised themselves to play, when they determined to attend the Swayamvara at Kanauj.

A. Both went as minstrels.

Q. Also did Prithvi Rai determine to marry Samyukta partly because she was the daughter of his rival and partly for the fame of her great beauty? Did he then send a woman-servant to obtain the post of her maid? And did this old nurse set herself to make the princess fall in love with Prithvi Rai?

A. They had fallen in love with each other, hearing deeds and beauty and seeing portraits. Falling in love through portraits is an old Indian game.

Q. How did Krishna come to be brought up amongst the shepherds?

A. His father had to fly with the baby to save it from the Tyrant Kamsa, who ordered all the babes (male) from that year to be killed, as he was afraid one of them would be Krishna and dethrone him (through prophecy). He kept Krishna's father and mother in prison (they were his cousins) for fear of that prophecy.

Q. How did this part of his life terminate?

A. He came with his brother Baldeva and Nanda, his foster-father, invited by the Tyrant to a festival. (The Tyrant had plotted his destruction.) He killed the Tyrant and instead of taking the throne placed the nearest heir on it. Himself he never took any fruit of action.

Q. Can you give me any dramatic incident of this period?

A. This period is full of miracles. He as a baby was once naughty and the shepherd-mother tried to tie him with her churning string, and found she



could not bind him with all the strings she had. Then her eyes opened and she saw that she was going to bind him who had the whole universe in his body ! She began to pray and tremble. Immediately the Lord touched her with his *Mâyâ* and she saw only the child !

Brahmâ, the chief of gods, disbelieving that the Lord had become a cowherd, stole one day all the cows and cowherd boys and put them to sleep in a cave. When he came back, he found the same boys and cows round Krishna. Again he stole the new lot and hid them away. He came back and saw there the same again. Then his eyes opened and began to see numerous worlds and heavens and Brahmâs by the thousands, one greater than the preceding, in the body of the Lord.

He danced on the Serpent Kâliya who had been poisoning the water of the Yamuna, and held up the Mount Govardhana in defiance of Indra whose worship he had forbidden and who in revenge wanted to kill all the people of Vraja by deluge of rain. They were all sheltered by Krishna under the hill Govardhana which he upheld with a finger on their head.

He from his childhood was against Snake-worship and Indra-worship. Indra-worship is Vedic ritual. Throughout the Gita he is not favourable to Vedic ritual.

This is the period of his love to Gopis. He was fifteen years of age.

## FOUR PATHS OF YOGA

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Our main problem is to be free. It is evident then that until we realize ourselves as the Absolute, we cannot attain to deliverance. Yet there are various ways of attaining to this realization. These methods have the generic name of Yoga (to join), to join ourselves to our reality. These Yogas, though divided into various methods, can principally be classed as four; and as each is only a method leading indirectly to the realization of the Absolute, they are suited to different temperaments. Now it must be remembered that it is not that the assumed man becomes the real man or Absolute. There is no becoming with the Absolute. It is ever free, ever perfect; but the ignorance that has covered its nature for a time is to be removed. Therefore the whole scope of all systems of Yoga (and each religion represents one) is to clear up this ignorance and allow the Atman to restore its own nature. The chief helps in this liberation are *Abhyâsa* and *Vairâgyam*.

*Vairâgyam* is non-attachment to life, because it is the will to enjoy that brings all this bondage in its train; and *Abhyâsa* is constant practice of any one of the Yogas.

*Karma-Yoga*.—This Karma is purifying the mind by means of work. Now if any work is done, good or bad, it must produce as a result a good or bad effect; no power can stay it, once the cause is present. Therefore good action producing good Karma, and bad action, bad Karma, the soul will go on in eternal bondage without ever hoping for deliverance. Now Karma belongs only to the body or the mind, never to the Atman; only it can cast a veil before the Atman. The veil cast by bad Karma is ignorance. Good Karma has the power to strengthen the moral powers and thus creates non-attachment; it destroys the tendency towards bad Karma and thereby purifies the mind. But if the work is done with an intention of enjoyment, it can only produce that very enjoyment

and does not purify the mind or Chitta. Therefore all work should be done without any desire to enjoy the fruits thereof. All fear and all desire to enjoy here or hereafter must be banished for ever by the Karma-Yogi. Moreover, this Karma without desire of return will destroy the selfishness which is the root of all bondage. The watchword of the Karma-Yogi is "not I, but Thou," and no amount of self-sacrifice is too much for him. But he does this without any desire to go to heaven, or to gain name or fame or any other benefit in this world. Although the explanation and rationale of this unselfish work is only in Jñāna-Yoga, yet the natural divinity of man makes him love all sacrifice, simply for the good of others, without any ulterior motive, whatever his creed or opinion. Again, with many the bondage of wealth is very great; and Karma-Yoga is absolutely necessary for them as breaking the crystallization that has gathered round his love of money.

Next is *Bhakti-Yoga*. Bhakti or worship or love in some form or other is the easiest, pleasantest and most natural way of man. The natural state of this universe is attraction and that is surely followed by an ultimate disunion. Even so, love is the natural impetus of union in the human heart; and though itself a great cause of misery, properly directed towards the proper object, it brings deliverance. The object of Bhakti is God. Love cannot be without a subject and an object. The object of love again must be a being at first who can reciprocate our love. Therefore the God of love must be in some sense a human God. He must be a God of love. Aside from the question whether such a God exists or not, it is the truth that to those who have love in their heart this Absolute appears as a God of love, as personal.

The lower forms of worship, which embody the idea of God as a judge or punisher or someone to be obeyed through fear, do not deserve to be called

love, although they are forms of worship gradually expanding into higher forms. We pass on to the consideration of love itself. We will illustrate love by a triangle, of which the first angle at the base is fearlessness. So long as there is fear, it is not love. Love banishes all fear. A mother with her baby will face a tiger to save her child. The second angle is love that never asks, never begs. The third or the apex is love that loves for the sake of love itself. Even the idea of object vanishes. Love is the only form in which love is loved. This is the highest abstraction and the same as the Absolute.

Next is *Rāja-Yoga*. This Yoga fits in with every one of these Yogas. It fits enquirers of all classes with or without any belief, and it is the real instrument of religious enquiry. As each science has its particular method of investigation, so is this Rāja-Yoga the method of religion. This science also is variously applied according to various constitutions. The chief parts are the Prāṇāyāmas, concentration and meditation. For those who believe in God, a symbolical name, received from a Guru, will be very helpful, such as Om or other sacred words. Om is the greatest, meaning the Absolute. Meditating on the meaning of these holy names and repeating them is the chief practice.

Next is *Gñāna-Yoga*. This is divided into three parts. First: hearing—that the Atman is the only reality, everything else is Māyā (relativity). Second: reasoning upon this philosophy from all points of view. Third: giving up all further argumentation and realizing the truth. This realization consists in first being certain that Brahman is real and everything else is unreal; second, giving up all desire of enjoyment; third, controlling the mind; fourth, intense desire to be free. Meditating on this reality always and reminding the soul of its real nature are the only ways in this Yoga. It is the highest, but most difficult. Many persons get an intellectual grasp of it, but very few attain realization.

## SOME FUNDAMENTALS OF HINDUISM—II

By THE EDITOR

### I

The Hindus, admittedly the most religious people on earth and most devoted to spiritual practice, are fully conscious of the immense difficulties of God-realisation. They are quite aware of the mountain-high obstacles in the way of an aspirant. The aspirant, therefore, goes about his work with unflagging perseverance and infinite patience. His ideal he feels to be so high that when anyone asks him if he has realised God, he only makes a negative answer. This does not show his lack of faith or enthusiasm or even of spirituality. Foreigners' ignorance makes them interpret it as such. The Hindu knows that he has been for millions of lives in the habit of thinking the world as real and of revelling in and desiring it. These tendencies of the mind cannot go in a day. Therefore he insists on spiritual *practice*. There must be determined effort. He must approach a spiritual teacher and be instructed in the ways of spiritual practice and pursue them all his life so that at the end he may make some progress. But before his spiritual efforts may be fruitful, he knows he must be rid of his strong desires for the joys of the relative life. This is absolutely necessary. Not all can successfully undertake spiritual practice. Even the physical conditions, not to say the mental, of most men are unsuitable for any serious spiritual practice. Their nerves and brains will refuse to carry the subtle spiritual perceptions. They will refuse or collapse. Their mind, it is superfluous to mention, will be totally disinclined to dwell on things spiritual.

Every man has his own natural level of consciousness. He finds it easiest and most pleasant to dwell on it. In a broad classification we shall find that all men

fall under three heads. Some are naturally lazy and indolent. They are passive and inactive. Their mind is very slow to move and brain dull. The keen joys of the world do not attract them. They are creatures of darkness. They are of the lowest grade. Another class of people are extremely active and ambitious. They are full of desires and eagerly aspire for the joys, powers and riches of the world. They want name and fame. They are ready to fight for them. They are fond of pomp and pleasure. They are intelligent, but their intelligence is good enough for worldly projects only,—it does not penetrate to the spiritual realms. They are the second grade. The highest grade people are apparently like the lowest grade. From the outside, they look passive and lazy. They dislike the pomps of the world. They like simplicity very much. But their mind is alert. If they like, they can manifest tremendous energy. They are keenly intelligent. But their intelligence penetrates the mysteries of spiritual existence. Their mind is habitually calm and is free from all worldly ambitions and passions. In Hindu phraseology these three grades are respectively called *Tâmasika*, *Râjasika* and *Sâttvika*. Only the *Sâttvika* people can truly practise spirituality. The *Tâmasikas* never. Those of the *Râjasikas* who are near the *Sâttvika* grade, feel a tendency towards spirituality. They also can fruitfully undertake spiritual practice. But even from this *Râjasika* to the *Sâttvika* state, the progress is not an easy one. A hard discipline has to be imposed on the aspirant. He cannot live anyhow and yet gain in spirituality.

All religious schools insist on a preliminary discipline before the actual realisation can begin. This discipline can be designated by the well-known

term *Sādhana-Chatustaya* (Fourfold *Sādhana*). These four *Sādhana*s are the discrimination between the Real and the unreal; the aversion to the enjoyment of the fruits of one's actions here and hereafter; the group of six attributes—calmness or tranquillity (fixing the mind steadfastly on the Real after detaching it from sense-objects), self-control (withdrawing the sense-organs from sense-objects), self-withdrawal (the mind-function ceasing to act by means of external objects), forbearance (bearing of afflictions without caring to redress them, being at the same time free from anxiety or lament on their score), faith (acceptance by firm judgment of the mind as true of what the scriptures and the *Guru* instruct), self-settledness (constant concentration of the intellect on the ever-pure *Brahman*); and yearning for freedom (the desire to free oneself, by realising one's true nature, from all bondages). These qualifications must be acquired one way or another before we can begin true spiritual practice. Why? Because otherwise we shall fail to have any conviction about the Reality which we want to realise. If we examine the conditions, we shall find that they are all calculated to confer freedom on the mind and reason. The first of the four *Sādhana*s, the discrimination of the Real and the unreal, is only another form of "universal scepticism." It requires that we should question the reality of the phenomenal world and reject whatever is found unreal. But it must not be superficial or a mere make-believe, for that is worthless and takes us nowhere. It should profoundly mould our life, behaviour and consciousness: we must learn to look upon, feel and treat the unreal as unreal. That is what the second *Sādhana*, the renunciation of the fruits of actions, implies; for a hankering for the delectable fruits of earth and heaven ill assorts with the consciousness of their unreality. Therefore, all desires for enjoyment at present or in future must be given up. The third, the acquisition

of the six qualities, such as calmness etc., prevents the mind from going to and dwelling on the sense-objects as real. And the fourth, the desire for freedom, concentrates the scattered forces of the mind and makes them flow in one impetuous current to the search and discovery of the Real. These four together constitute *Samnyāsa*. Only when the mind has been freed from the vitiating assumption of the reality of the world and devoted to the search of truth, is one fit for *Samnyāsa*. But without *Brahmacharya*, continence, none of them are possible or of any avail. *Brahmacharya* not only perfects the brain and the nervous system and strengthens them to bear the tremendous strain of sustained and powerful thought, but what is more important, it frees the mind of the sex idea, the more potent of the twin factors of *Māyā* or Primal Ignorance which clouds the knowledge of things, ensnares reason, and conjures fantastic illusions for the soul to dream through the succession of births.

Mere intellect is not enough to convince us of the unreality of the life we are living and of the reality of the life that spiritual practice is expected to reveal to us. Two requirements are urgent: we must have a deep conviction of the truth of the Ideal we want to realise; and our heart must become pure and mind free from desires. The "four *Sādhana*s" are needed for both these purposes. What is wanted is that the aspirant must free himself of all *Rajas* and enter the *Sāttvika* state. Then the spiritual outlook will become natural to him, and he would no longer doubt the spiritual realities and will be filled with a real faith. It will become easy for him to do his spiritual exercises and progress towards the goal. Hindus believe that truth should naturally shine in and before every man. In our present state, we are apt to think that it is falsehood that appears before us naturally and that truth has always to be carefully sought out. But the opposite is the fact. The reason why

truth does not spontaneously appear before us is that we have covered ourselves with *Tamas* and *Rajas*. When we would divest ourselves of these sheaths, the light of truth will of itself shine unclouded in and around us. So it is said that *Sattva* is of the nature of the revealer.

## II

But what are these *Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*? These words are very profusely used not only in Hindu philosophical and scriptural texts, but by the common people. Learned discussions have been held by scholars on the true significance of these terms. Some have argued that these are the constituent substances of the phenomenal universe, others that these are but qualities. Whatever the exact philosophical meaning, the common significance seems to be that they represent three different views and outlooks. The words are used in relation to all things, thoughts, feelings and actions. A food is *Sāttvika* or *Rājasika* or *Tāmasika*. A charity is *Sāttvika*. An action is *Sāttvika*. A mode of life is *Sāttvika*. An ideal is *Sāttvika*. A conception of God is *Sāttvika* or *Rājasika*. A man is *Sāttvika*. And so on. What is meant is that if we classify all things, actions, feelings, states of consciousness, ideas, ideals or Divine conceptions, we shall find them fall within the three grades we have described before. Evidently the ground of this classification is purely psychological. These are three definitions or descriptions or standards of judgment by which we can know the relative spiritual value of all things, ideas and actions. It is more or less a subjective way of evaluating reality by means of a scale of spiritual values. This is quite characteristic of the Hindu view of life. When we say that a food is *Sāttvika*, we mean that it is conducive to spirituality. When we call it *Tāmasika*, we condemn it as unspiritual. Similarly of our feelings, thoughts, actions, ideals, conceptions of God. The world has value to us only in reference to the ultimate

purpose of our life. Every day even a common Hindu is judging his experience in this way. All old experiences and things have been judged by this triple standard and all new things and experiences shall be similarly judged by it. This indeed is the central tendency of the Hindu life.

## III

We have so far dealt with the purely spiritual side of the Hindu religious ideal. But a religious ideal has also its intellectual aspect, a background of clear understanding. Every religion needs three things for its perpetuity : a philosophy, illustrative lives and a continuous tradition. The need of the first two is easily understood. Man is also an intellectual being. He not only wants the fulfilment of life, but wants it to harmonise with all his experiences. If his spiritual ideals do not harmonise with his secular experiences or outlook, he is in agony. He must find a harmony. For this an adequate philosophy is necessary. A philosophy, however, would be dry and uninspiring if its conclusions are not found demonstrated in the lives of saints. They are the test and proof of the truth and correctness of the philosophy. The need of the third element, continuity of tradition, may not be so apparent. But it is urgently necessary. It is well-known that a people without history is at the mercy of every passing wind. A historical consciousness is a source of inexhaustible strength to a people. In a sense we live by our past. This is true not only in the secular affairs of a nation, but also in its religious affairs. The fact is, if religion had been a living experience with all the members of a nation, they might take to any philosophy old or new, for the spiritual truths then would have been actual and real to them. But most men and women follow religion through faith and belief and not through actual experience. But faith is not possible unless it has been made instinctive with us. It must become a part of

our being. It must become natural to us. That is not possible unless it is derived through tradition. Until a thing or fact or belief has become traditional, it has not our unquestioning allegiance. All new things are objects of suspicion and doubt to the popular mind. And it can easily violate the new system. We hear nowadays loud proclamations that we must break all traditions and become free. Those who talk this way, little realise what they are talking about. In secular matters tradition may be broken sometimes with impunity, but not so in matters which are beyond the grasp of the ordinary mind. If religious experience had been easily available, we could advise people to ignore traditions and choose freely. But it is not so. It is achieved rarely by only a few in any age. To ask the masses to break traditions is to leave them adrift, to make them helpless. The only result would be a total collapse of religious life. We do not mean that people are to be superstitious or that they are not to think freely about their religion. What we suggest is that the traditions, if there are antiquated elements in them, should be slowly transformed and reinterpreted in the light of modern knowledge and needs. But never should they be rejected post-haste. The reformation of traditions should be unconscious and indirect, not direct and violent.

We have said that religious progress with the masses is a matter of faith. So long as the faith is strong, one is safe. But with the passing of years, a time comes when the nation feels exhausted. It goes to sleep. Then it is the traditions that hold the nation together and save it from breaking into pieces. The traditions continue, and when the nation reawakes from its slumbers, it is these traditions that furnish it with clues to rehabilitate its past glory. And not merely that. Religious traditions do not serve merely a religious purpose. They have also their cultural, social and domestic implications. With the loss of religious

traditions, incalculable harm is done to the nation in all those respects also. Hence we find that every religion has given a place of honour and special solicitude to a particular book, the *Bible*, the *Koran*, the *Tripitakas*, the *Vedas*, etc. The books are the emblems of the spiritual treasures in possession of the votaries. They may be antiquated in many respects. But they serve the great purpose of maintaining traditions. We Hindus have the three *Pras-thānas*—the *Upanishads*, the *Brahma-Sutras* and the *Gītā*, all parts and emanations of the sacred *Vedas*. Hindus believe that all their religious ideals and practices are derived from the *Vedas*. It may be that this belief is not wholly true. But it has its own value : it maintains the continuity of tradition and consequently the solidarity of the nation. And we are in a fortunate position. Those religions that find their traditions in conflict with the accumulated and proved knowledge of mankind, are really in a very unhappy fix. Hinduism has escaped this catastrophe. It can boldly say that its ancient findings are in accord with the modern knowledge and spirit. It has only to make new applications of its principles in certain respects in the present age, that is all.

#### IV

We mentioned in our last article that Hinduism gives scope to all religious ideals and methods of realisation. If there were not a comprehensive philosophy behind this liberalism, Hinduism would have been a loose, incoherent mass. Fortunately it possesses the requisite philosophy. According to it, all the different religious ideals can be broadly classified under three heads : dualistic, quasi-monistic and monistic. All conceivable objects of worship must fall into these three grades. And these three grades again are not independent of one another. It has been found that in his spiritual progress, a man first conceives the object of his adoration as

a separate being. But as his realisation progresses, he sees this separation gradually obliterated. He feels himself as a part of the Divine Being Himself. This is the second stage. But when he advances further, he becomes one with Divinity, in fact he realises that all sense of duality was a delusion. All worship thus is a march towards the realisation of the Absolute.

It would be wrong to say that all Hindu votaries recognise this gradation of experience. Some have denied the validity of the absolute experience. Some have insisted on an experience transcending even the absolute experience. But whatever their contentions, they all agree that an intimate relationship must be established between the Lord and man before any freedom or redemption is possible. That relationship has been conceived by all Hindu religious schools as the realisation of one's self as part or whole of the substance of God. Practically considered, that is enough. For in whatever way we may realise our union with the Divine, the result is the same : freedom from the bondages that drag us from birth to death and from death to birth. And there is also another point. If we read between the lines, we shall find that even those who have denied the validity of monistic experience, have some of them realised it, only their standard of evaluation is different. Those who want to know God through love, will naturally insist on retaining their individuality, for only thus love-relations are possible, so that when they actually realise the monistic state, they ignore it, and exalt, on the other hand, the philosophically lower state of quasi-monism. Anyhow, these differences between the schools are only theoretically important. Practically, they all point to the same goal, the complete freedom from *Samsāra* and eternal union with the Divinity.

If such is the synthesis of the ends, the synthesis of the means has been achieved by the well-known classification of all methods of worship into the

four *Yogas*,—*Jñāna*, *Rāja*, *Bhakti* and *Karma*. These terms do not require any explanation here. Their significance is quite well-known. All the different ways of approaching and knowing God must fall under these four heads. The synthesis of the spiritual ends is made from the subjective view-point. The synthesis of the means also is achieved from the same point of view. It is based on the analysis of human nature. We have the faculty of knowing through reason, through analysis of reality, through love and through action. Knowing, feeling, and willing are the well-known triple functions of the mind. The *Yogas* are based on these. So long as man is what he is now constitutionally, these four *Yogas* also will remain the broad heads under which all forms of worship can be classified. Of course practically considered, these *Yogas* are always mixed with one another in the forms of worship. Pure forms of these *Yogas* are not abundant in actual practice. But one of these predominates in every form of worship, and that determines its character.

## V

It is not perhaps generally recognised that in one sense all Hindus are pre-eminently *Jñāna-Yogins*. All Hindu sects hold the *Upanishads* and the *Vedānta-Sūtras* as their authority. All the sects enjoying any prestige in the Indian religious world, have their commentaries on them. Now, whatever the other differences in their views, in one point they all practically agree,—in the recognition of the potentialities of the individual soul. It has been rightly said that the Semitic religions have directed their attention to the Godhead and the Hindus to the Self,—*Atman*. The *Upanishads* are full of references to the *Atman*. They are more concerned with the knowledge of the *Atman* than of God. This tendency is still predominant in the Hindu religious outlook. All agree that the realisation of God is tantamount to certain developments of the self.—

We have said *developments*, but that is not the word used by the monists. Anyhow what we want to point out is that the importance of the self in the spiritual evolution is well recognised by all. All agree that infinite power and blessedness are potential in the individual soul and that these must be manifested if the Divine is to be realised. This recognition makes us subjective in our outlook, and such subjectivity is of the very essence of knowledge. This philosophical spirit which pervades all sectarian outlooks, makes it possible for the different creeds to realise their basic unity easily.

Not merely in the conception of the self is this philosophical spirit apparent, but also in considering the process of spiritual realisation as a psychological one. No Hindu ever thinks that spiritual beatitude is a miracle or gracious gift from Heaven. It is true we also have the theory of grace. But it holds an unimportant place in Hinduism. And in those schools which conceive Divine realisation as an act of grace on the part of the Lord, self-surrender (which itself is an act of strenuous effort on the part of the devotee, with all the attendant self-analysis and discipline) is made a condition precedent. Thus all Hindus practically agree that spiritual realisation, by whatever terms we may call it, is the result of certain psychological processes. These have been aptly described by Patanjali as *Ashtāṅga Yoga*, the eight-limbed *Yoga*. Though Patanjali enumerates them in reference to *Rāja Yoga*, they are true of other processes also. *Yama* and *Niyama* are ethical disciplines. *Asana* is the result of mental poise,—the body also acquires poise. By *Asana*, certainly physical contortions are not meant, for many of the *Asanas* can be practised also by persons who are quite innocent of spirituality. *Asana* refers to a calm state of mind, of which a result is steady posture. *Prāṇāyāma* is not breath-control, but the control of energies. *Pratyāhāra*—withdrawing the mind from all outer objects. *Dhāraṇā*—the fixing of it on the object

of adoration. *Dhyāna* is meditation, and *Samādhi* the complete absorption in God. It will be seen that in all methods of worship these stages occur. All the processes of spiritual realisation, when analysed, reveal these eight stages. It is true that these stages are not recognised in all the methods under the same names or according to the same broad classifications. But all will recognise a psychological series along with the series of objective realisations. This psychological outlook is another reason of the essentially philosophical attitude of the Hindu mind.

Yet another contributory cause or expression of this philosophical attitude of the Hindus is the doctrines of *Karma* and reincarnation. Though traces of these doctrines may be found in other countries, these are peculiarly Hindu doctrines. According to them the past, present and future of every one are in one's own hands. We reap as we sow. If we do good deeds, we prosper; if we do bad deeds, we suffer. Our present condition, station in life, prospects, powers and opportunities are all the results of our past doings,—doings not in gross forms only but also in thought and feeling. And we can so act in the present life that we may nullify the effects of our past and prosper in future. By the way, it must be admitted that we are not absolutely bound by our *Karma*. We must also recognise an element of freedom, however subtle and invisible. For if there were not this freedom which introduces new factors into our life, our present life would have been an exact reproduction of our past life and our future life of the present. But that is not so. We are changing from life to life. That means that new forces are being added to the forces of *Karma*. We must, therefore, admit the presence of another moulding influence in our life in addition to that of our *Karmas*. And what can that be if not our self? We have, therefore, to recognise an element of freedom and self-determination. The common idea of *Karma* as an inexorable fate is not,



therefore, correct. We build, we also destroy. We can, therefore, build up our future, only we must take the *Karmik* forces also into account.

But to come to our point. The theory of *Karma* throws all the responsibility of self-development and progress on our own shoulders. It does not refer them to an external agency. The *Karmas* weave the bands that bind us and the veil that clouds our vision. The works that we do, the thoughts that we think, the desires that we feel, do not die the moment they vanish from our consciousness. They live in seed forms, and until they have been destroyed, they would go on perpetuating the individuality which is the nexus of cosmic ignorance. This individuality is made up of ignorance made constant by the powers of *Karma*. And it does not die with the death of the body. It passes into a nascent state to build another physical sheath when the time and the opportunity comes. Only by realising spiritual knowledge can we destroy the chains of *Karma* and their subtle forces. By no other means.

The theory of *Karma* and reincarnation is oftentimes mixed up with the modern theories of evolution. Sometimes it is asked : Can a man be born as a lower animal? The answer is : Why not? The theory of evolution has in truth no connection with the theory of *Karma* and reincarnation. It is true that the evolution of the physiological structure is accompanied by a corresponding mental evolution; and that the higher the evolution of body, the higher the development of mind. From this it may seem to follow that when a mind which has once inhabited a human body is reborn, it must have at least a human body. But the theory of *Karma* and reincarnation does not say that in a particular birth the entire mind becomes operative. If the entire mind were active in determining the form of the new body, it is possible the reborn man would not be subhuman in physical form. But the Hindu belief is that all *Karmas* or *Samskâras* do not operate at

every time. Some only are active, others passively bide their time. And those which are active are not necessarily human always. We have many base desires unworthy even of animals. When these *Vrittis* predominate and produce the body, that body must necessarily be subhuman, of animals or worms. There is no knowing when which *Vrittis* will grow strong in us. Even in a saintly person, an evil passion may rage for some time. Of course the value of our previous human birth is not thereby lost. When the worse *Vrittis* are worked off, our upward path becomes clearer and easier.

A common error that results from the uncritical acceptance of the theory of evolution is the conclusion that since in course of evolution lower animals have developed into higher, man can never again become a lower animal. The utmost that can be inferred is that the human species will grow into a super-human species. [But is that true? Are there not also retrogressions? Evolution need not necessarily be progress. Evolution is only change, whether for better or for worse depends on the environments. In human history we find noble civilised races degraded into half savages.] It has no place for reincarnation. In so far as men are parts of the species, they continue to live on and grow in their progeny. But when they die, they go out of the earthly species; they have no longer anything to do with it. Their future is then determined by their predominant and active *Karmas* and they may be born as either men or animals or worms. Then they enter into the evolving life of new species and partake in and influence them as long as they live. It is as it were many different moulds of life have been created on earth with their graded spiritual values. Individuals cast themselves in them from life to life according to the nature of their prevailing *Karmas*; they are not permanently related to any of them. The moulds—the species—may have inter-connections with one another, one having developed from another. They

nave their separate lives, with their own laws of being and growth which are constituted at any given time by the individuals partaking in them. The theory of reincarnation thus presupposes two series of lives, of the species and the individuals, individuals not being permanently related to the species.

The doctrines of *Karma* and reincarnation have, however, such a scientific form that our entire life of bondage and freedom may be explained on the basis of our *Karmas*. Hindus implicitly believe in them. This belief has naturally habituated them to look upon life and reality in a philosophical spirit.

There is another element still,—the conception of immortality. This is also extremely philosophical. In the Semitic religions, the idea of the end of life is conceived as an extra-terrestrial condition in a naive and literal sense. We, on the other hand, conceive it as a state realisable even now and here. It has nothing to do with our having a body or not a body. The highest and truly permanent condition of man is the state of superconsciousness—*Samādhi* as we call it. When and where it can be realised, depends entirely on our condition of mind. If the mind is obsessed by desires for relative life, even if we go to heaven, we shall still remain in bondage, and the eternal life shall not be ours. But if we get rid of desires, and make the mind absolutely tranquil, even though we may be in a body, we shall realise the eternal state. No going to heaven is necessary for this. Similar is the conception of eternal life or immortality. The popular view of it is the infinite prolongation of the normal life. But that is foolish. For mortality is a state of consciousness only. The identification of oneself with evanescent things, such as body and mind, is mortality. These are mortal;—they are never permanent, they constantly change and pass. Our identification of ourselves with them makes us think that we also change and pass. To realise immortality is to break up this identification. We have to free ourselves from

the bondages of body and mind, and then our pristine nature will shine out in its eternal glory. Now this is also a state of consciousness,—a consciousness free and unlimited; and though apparently we may be in a body, we may realise it now and here. It must be admitted that this is a highly philosophical conception. But it is no exaggeration to say that even the average Hindu's idea of immortality is somewhat akin to it. A Hindu never confuses going to heaven with immortality. He believes in heavens where he knows people enjoy the fruits of the good works they have done on earth. But he also knows that these end in course of time and then men have to be born again to work out their *Karmas* in order that they may attain *Bhakti* and *Jñāna*. And in *Bhakti* and *Jñāna* alone, he knows, lies real *Mukti*. Thus even in a most backward village, the ideal of religious life is conceived to be the attainment of the mystic state, in which one loses all consciousness of body and external world; and people believe that birth and death cease only for those who have permanently attained this superconscious state. Can there be anything more philosophical?

This philosophical aptitude has certainly a great value. In the world of men, mere faith and emotion are blind guides. If an individual or a race stands pre-eminently on them, it cannot afford to advance harmoniously with the advance of knowledge. The collective life of men is becoming more and more systematised. The extraordinary search for correct knowledge and truth has a strong moulding influence on the entire mankind. At this juncture, those religions which would not *instinctively* stand on a philosophical basis, will be faced with an internal conflict. We say "instinctively", for it must be inborn in us, a matter of long habit. For religious habits are so strong that a deliberate attitude is often of little use. Hinduism fortunately has escaped this conflict by its inherent philosophical outlook.

## VI

Our survey of Hinduism has but been cursory. Much has been left out. But certain points have emerged, which give Hinduism a distinctive character. We may summarise them here : Hinduism believes in the infinite expressions of the Divine. It, therefore, allows everyone to realise God in any of His aspects. Freedom of worship is thus completely ensured. It believes in the various modes of worship also. All faiths that lead to God are valid. It has thus an unlimited scope for assimilating all new forms that may be discovered in future. But it insists on a certain view of life. It is that everyone must learn to look upon the phenomenal world as unreal and the Absolute as the only true reality. This view of life naturally discourages action or intellectualism, however fine and elevating, as the highest condition of life. It considers mystic awareness in which the body and mind are dead, as the culminating state of life,—this in fact is the real life ac-

cording to it. In order that this state may be realised, it prescribes certain purificatory disciplines for all under one form or another. If such be its fundamental features in the spiritual aspect, intellectually, it has synthetised all the different spiritual ends and means in the philosophy of *Vedānta*, and has made it the mental symbol of the entire Hindu religion and spiritual aspirations and activities. Along with this it has taught its votaries to conceive all religious ideals and experiences in the spirit of *Jñāna*, philosophically and psychologically, seeing fundamental unity in all the processes of spiritual realisation. And it has made the self the foundation of religious experience, thereby adding to the dignity of the individual.

We have to note that these features are most of them, if not all, peculiar to Hinduism. But they are also at the same time very suitable to the genius of the age. What future does this point to for Hinduism and what duties does it impose on us Hindus?

## A CONVERSATION WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA

BY A DEVOTE

When I met Swami Turiyananda at Benares in 1922, I asked him :

“Mahārāj, the Master (Sri Ramakrishna) had practised various kinds of *Sādhanā*, and I have heard that he instructed you, his disciples, also in many different ways of *Sādhanā*. But from you we have received no other instruction except about *Dhyāna* (meditation) and *Japa* (repetition of God's names). Please tell me the *Sādhanās* which the Master prescribed for you as means to proper meditation.”

The Swami replied :

“It is true that the Master instructed some in different kinds of *Sādhanā*. Me, however, he asked only to practise *Dhyāna* and *Japa*. But he told me to meditate at midnight being completely naked. The one speciality of the Master

was that he would not be satisfied with merely instructing. He would keenly observe how far his instruction was being carried out. A few days after, he asked me : ‘Well, do you meditate at midnight being naked?’ ‘Yes, Sir, I do,’ I replied. ‘How do you feel?’ ‘Sir, I feel as if I am free of all bondage.’ ‘Yes, go on with the practice, you will be much benefited.’

“On another occasion he told me that *Sādhanā* was nothing but ‘making the mind and mouth one’. In those days I used to study very much the *Vedānta* of Sankara. He said to me : ‘Well, what is the use of merely saying that the world is false? Naren can say that. For if he says that the world is unreal, unreal it at once becomes. If he says that there is no thorny plant,

the thorny plant vanishes. But if you put your hands on the thorns, you will at once feel their pricks.' ”

*Myself*: “Swami Brahmananda said that we must be *Kriyā-sila*, we must practise. When I asked him what I should practise, he said: ‘Go on with what I have prescribed for you now, that is, with *Dhyāna* and *Japa*. I shall further instruct you later on.’ But he is now no more. Please instruct me yourself.”

The Swami remained silent for a while. By and by his look became grave. He then said: “You must continue with one mood for a long time, till it has become firmly established in your life. I think that is what Swami Brahmananda meant by being *Kriyā-sila*.”

*Myself*: “Please explain further.”

*Swami*: “In the early days, I used to practise a spiritual mood assiduously for a time. Once I practised hard the mood of being an instrument in the hands of the Lord—‘I am the tool, He is the wielder of the tool.’ I used to watch carefully every thought and action of mine and see if they were inspired and filled with that mood. Thus passed some days. Then I practised ‘I am *Brahman*’ for some time.”

By and by the conversation turned on Mahatma Gaudhi. The Swami said: “The mind and mouth of the Mahatma are one. A certain boy known to me once went to a poor woman of Benares to have some wheat ground by her. The woman was very busy. So he waited. There was a bundle of leaves near the place where he sat. The woman asked him to bring it to her. But he hesitated. The woman smiled and said: ‘You cry *Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jay!*, but you do not do what he says. How can you hope to get *Swarāj* this way? I should work for you and you should work for me. There is no high or low in work.’ The boy was ashamed and took the bundle to her. When he returned, he told me of the lesson he had learnt from a poor, illiterate woman.

“Swami Vivekananda was once lecturing on the immortality of soul in America.—‘I am the *Atman*, I have neither birth nor death. Whom shall I fear?’ etc. Some cow-boys wanted to test him and invited him to their place to speak. As he began to lecture, they fired their guns and some of the shots passed near his head. But he continued with his lecture unafraid and undisturbed. The cow-boys were astonished. They ran to him, mounted him on their shoulders and began to dance, shouting ‘He is our hero.’

“This is what is meant by making the mind and mouth one.”

*Myself*: “Mahārāj, how can one learn the command of God?”

*Swami*: “One way is to see God and talk with Him. Then He Himself says what you are to do. But of course it is an ultimate realisation.”

*Myself*: “Yes, Sir, I have heard that whatever Swami Brahmananda did, was thus under the direct instruction of Sri Ramakrishna.”

*Swami*: “But there is another way in which many can hear the commands of God. Suppose you are passing along the road,—the chance words of a boy suddenly fall on your ears and they at once solve all your problems. Thus it happens that through the mouth of a boy or a madman or in other ways, certain words reach your ears, penetrate into your deepest heart and resolve your doubts, and you feel in your heart of hearts that those were verily the words of God.

“There are also *Sādhana*s for receiving commands from God. You have to repeat again and again this *Mantram* of the *Gītā*: ‘With my nature overpowered by weak commiseration, with a mind in confusion about duty, I supplicate Thee. Say decidedly what is good for me. I am Thy disciple. Instruct me who have taken refuge in Thee.’ (II. 7). Repeat it again and again. Then the Lord will somehow let you know His will.

“While I was wandering in Raj-

putana, I met with a *Sādhu*. He was sitting alone repeating: 'Abiding in the body of living being as (the fire) *Vaishvānara*, I, associated with the *Prāna* and *Apāna*, digest the fourfold food' (XV, 14). He was repeating it and passing his hand over his stomach.

I was told that he was suffering from indigestion and that was his remedy."

As I saluted his feet in farewell, the Swami said: "Give light and more light will come to you. 'The more you will give, the more your fund will increase.'"

## THE DELIGHT SUPERNAL

BY DR. MAHENDRANATH SIRCAR, M.A., PH.D.

When the realistic consciousness evaporates in the height of ecstasy, the adept begins to feel the all-pervasiveness of delight. Existence is felt to be nothing but delight; delight fills the finer being, delight permeates the outer being; the small and the great present alike the delight in full. The sense of gradation and hierarchy of delight no longer persists, for in the inmost being delight is spread in its widest commonalty and utmost expansion. In this height of realisation the full is presented in equal magnitude in the tiniest as well as in the largest of objects. In reality, it has no magnitude and, therefore, it is possible for it to permeate the essence of all things in its entirety. This appears strange; but this is the fact, this is the truth. Division, magnitude, proportion are terms compatible with finite existence, they cannot be compatible with the Absolute. The Absolute is, therefore, present in its fullness everywhere and in every form of existence, great or small.

If this is true of being, it is equally true of delight. Delight is great or small so long as it is finite delight, so long as it is human delight; but delight as the essence of our being is everywhere the same. To know this is the highest wisdom, to feel this is to get over the joys of the flesh and the joys of the heart. With proper training and discipline the adept soon learns to feel the joy which knows no bounds and the delight which has neither ebb nor flow. It is felt everywhere the same, because it is in itself beyond the ken of distri-

bution and limitation. We have a nice description of the ecstatic vision of delight in the *Brihadāraṇyaka Upanisad* (5th *Brāhmaṇa*):

"This earth is honey for all creatures, and all creatures are honey for this earth. This shining, immortal Person who is in this earth, and, with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who is in the body—he, indeed, is just this Soul (*Ātman*), this Immortal, this *Brahma*, this All.

"These waters are honey for all things, and all things are honey for these waters. This shining, immortal Person who is these waters, and, with reference to oneself, this shining immortal Person who is made of semen—he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this *Brahma*, this All.

"This fire is honey for all things, and all things are honey for this fire. This shining, immortal Person who is in this fire, and, with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who is made of speech—he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this *Brahma*, this All.

"This wind is honey for all things, and all things are honey for this wind. This shining, immortal Person who is in this wind, and with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who is breath—he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this *Brahma*, this All.

"This sun is honey for all things, and all things are honey for this sun. This, shining, immortal Person who is in this sun, and, with reference to oneself, this shining immortal Person who is in the eye—he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this *Brahma*, this All.

"These quarters of heaven are honey for all things, and all things are honey for these quarters of heaven. This shining, immortal Person who is in these quarters of heaven, and with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who is in the echo—he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this Brahma, this All.

"This moon is honey for all things, and all things are honey for this moon. This shining, immortal Person who is in this moon, and, with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person consisting of mind—he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this Brahma, this All.

"This lightning is honey for all things, and all things are honey for this lightning. This shining, immortal Person who is in this lightning, and, with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who exists as heat—he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this Brahma, this All.

"This thunder is honey for all things, and all things are honey for this thunder. This shining, immortal Person who is in thunder, and, with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who is in sound and in tone—he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this Brahma, this All.

"This space is honey for all things, and all things are honey for this space. This shining, immortal Person who is in this space, and, with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who is in the space in the heart—he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this All.

"This Law (dharma) is honey for all things, and all things are honey for this Law. This shining, immortal Person who is in this Law, and, with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who exists as virtuousness—he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this Brahma, this All.

"This Truth is honey for all things, and all things are honey for this Truth. This shining, immortal Person who is in this Truth, and, with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who exists as truthfulness—he is just

this Soul, this Immortal, this Brahma, this All.

"This mankind (*mānusa*) is honey for all things, and all things are honey for this mankind. This shining, immortal Person who is in this mankind, and, with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who exists as a man—he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this Brahma, this All.

"This Soul (*Atman*) is honey for all things, and all things are honey for this Soul. This shining, immortal Person who is in this Soul, and, with reference to oneself, this shining, immortal Person who exists as Soul—he is just this Soul, this Immortal, this Brahma, this All.

"Verily, this Soul is the overlord of all things, the king of all things. As all the spokes are held together in the hub and felly of a wheel, just so in this Soul all things, all gods, all worlds, all breathing things, all selves are held together." (Hume's translation).

This delight cannot be the pragmatic satisfaction of confined vision. It is the subtlest of existence. It is in everything that meets our senses. It is in us, it is out of us. The *Brihadāranyaka* tells further that the same which is in the stars, the sun, the moon, the lightning, the air and the ether is also in us. No difference exists, no difference can exist. The heart of things and beings is filled with the integral being, and because of this, the eternal sympathy is felt everywhere the same, everything brings the message of joy to everything. Beyond the apparent differences which create jarring discord on the surface of existence, lies the unbounded bliss present everywhere in its absoluteness. The joyousness is perceived in self as well as in others. Everything appears as delight to everything, and a serene peace, security and freshness is felt everywhere. The spirit which is our essence and which we feel in its nakedness with the disappearance of all pseudo-truths of pragmatic consciousness, at once sets up a feeling and a delight untasted before. The freedom from all forms of restrictions is decided-

ly a new and unique experience; and this freedom of unrestricted being gives us a feeling which sees no pain of division or separation anywhere and can embrace everything as the carrier of the delightful intimation of immortal bliss.

The texts apparently draw a distinction between the delight spread out in nature and the delight felt in the soul, but it dispels this distinction when it clearly lays down that the delight felt in the inward being as well as that perceived in outward existence are the same and identical. The one is not the shadow of the other. The one does not originate or stimulate the other. The division dissolves in the height of consciousness, where the highest freedom and the greatest delight are felt. The least sense of difference which can make the one the recipient of the other, which can make them categorically different as the enjoyer and the enjoyed, is set aside. Everything is perceived in essence as delight and the sense of the physical and the psychical dissolves in the perception of the identity of bliss running through the inward and outward existence.

Such is the perception where the realistic existence becomes etherealised and idealised in ecstatic vision. The apparent division between the inward (adhyâtma) and the outward (adhibhuta) existence cannot obtain here, for the same truth is perceived, the same delight is felt in both.

The idealised vision has two stages. In the beginning it is of the commonalty of delight, in the end it is the intuition of Atman, the essence of delight. The abstraction becomes complete in the second stage where the least distinction between the inner and the outer is displaced by the finer perception of the distinctionless Atman.

The initial perception of the all-pervasiveness of delight is never dissociated from self, though its reference to it is not present in the earlier texts. A finer vision must be developed before it can see the delight of all existence to be the delight of self. The mystic vision

and realisation in its inception and birth cannot reach the high level of the intuition of the self. It reaches the acme of realisation by stages of refinement. The conscious reference of delight to self and the perception of them are, therefore, a distinct advance in realisation and a unique presentation of delight in *excelsis*, for it is the feeling no longer of delight immanent in the outward existence or inward self, but it is the sense of the self being the delight-in-itself. The reference to the self identified with delight makes the vision of the transcendent; it is no longer the finer feeling of blessedness which the soul feels and the heart enjoys. It is the blessedness beyond feeling. It is beyond appreciation. The soul is identified with it. When one has a foretaste of this, one ventures to proceed beyond the delight felt in the inward being and the outward existence.

But this transcendent bliss of Atman cannot come at once. The intimation of Atman as the lord of all creatures (adhipati), the king of all beings, precedes the transcendent vision; the inner and the outer existence are synthesised in it—"the devas, the men, the prânas, all are consecrated to Atman."

This vision has a necessity inasmuch as it displaces the idea of a confined self by the conception of an all-inclusive one free to project the whole universe out of itself. The restricted vision of the empiric and the pragmatic self has no place here. Though the self has not been realised in transcendence, yet it is felt to be the thread, the support of the whole existence.

This reference of the cosmic existence to self has a deep meaning. It brings out its expansive nature and inspires mystic vision. It elevates our conception of the soul from its mistaken identity with its internal psychoses to the level of a supra-mental existence, enlivening the finite centres of consciousness as well as the cosmic deities and at the same time feeling within it its own transcendence over them. The delight of such an existence is also trans-

centent. It has a uniqueness of its own, being different from the delight of the finite centres of existence. It is the delight of the whole reflected in the centre.

But this delight of the whole is to be distinguished from the transcendent delight. The former has a reference and a concentration, the latter has none. The delight of the former is, therefore, the delight of unrestricted movement, life and freedom. It is the delight of all-comprehensive knowledge and overpowering being. The delight of the latter is the delight of stillness. It is the delight which cannot be felt, it cannot be tasted. It can be lived.\*

Yâjñavalkya taught his wife the gospel of Self as delight when he was about to retire into the life of contemplation and absorption. His reason is simple. His appeal is deep. Nothing is dear to us which is external to us. Everything is dear to us by its reference to self. The human relations, the external possessions, the culture in Vedic lore become our joy when they become

ours, when they are related to the self. The touch of "I" enlivens all. They are mere existences by themselves. They are sources of delight by this reference to self. This delight is borrowed delight. That which by its touch makes life easy, existence happy and all things attractive and felicitous is necessarily the highest beatitude. This beatitude is Self. It is the supreme puissance.

Yâjñavalkya is above the fatal mistake and the usual notion that delight is consequent upon eccentric relations and projections of Self. His vision is just the otherwise. Delight awaits the penetration into the centre of being. The more centralised becomes our vision, the more beatific becomes our normal experience, since every element of experience is seen in reference to the self. The reference to self grafts upon relations and experiences not only a meaning but an attraction. This can prove that the self is in essence delight. The more rarefied the consciousness and the more inward the penetration, the more is the experience of delight. This is a sure proof and testimony that the self is delight.

Sanat-kumâra in the Chhândogya Upanisad reiterates the same truth. Expanse is delight. The more life rises above the sense of division and the restrictions of relativity, the more it enjoys delight. Delight is, therefore, the invariable accompaniment of free being, and complete freedom is possible only in unbounded existence. The Chhândogya defines Bhumâ as installed in and identified with silence where one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, understands nothing else. This silence is the Plenum of Existence. This plenum is established in its own greatness. This plenum is below. It is above. It is to the east. It is to the south. It is to the north. It is all. The Bhumâ is self. The Chhândogya tells us further. The soul is below. The soul is above. The soul is to the east, etc. Verily he who sees this, who thinks this, who understands this, who has delight in the soul, who has intercourse with the soul, who

\* Samkara's interpretation of the texts may appear different, but it is not exactly different. Samkara explains the text in the light of cosmology. Still he seems to be quite alive to the mutual dependence of the finite existences. This mutual dependence speaks of their unity in the ultimate existence. *Vide* Samkara-Bhâsya, Brihadâranyaka Upanisad: introduction to the commentary on Chapter II, 5th Brâhmana. The word *Madhu* has been used by Samkara in the sense of an effect. But since the effect is one with the cause, the essence of being, therefore, permeates it. Hence the word *Madhu* would convey a better sense, specially from the mystic standpoint, if it is taken in the sense of delight. Whatever the cosmology may be, there can be no doubt that the mystic vision sees the spirit immanent in the world of appearance, for the great claim of mysticism is the immediate vision of truth here and now. And, therefore, to the mystic the world of effects has a meaning different from the one presented to the laity. If delight is the essence of being, this delight is in the appearance, and, therefore, it cannot be far from truth if the texts are interpreted as representing the mystic vision of delight immanent in the heart of things.



has bliss in the soul, he is autonomous, he moves in all the worlds freely.

The Chhândogya makes clear and explicit the reference of the delight to self, and its freedom from all limitations. The autonomy of the self is complete. It is the conquest not over urges, but over life and its limitations. Indeed Svarāj is a unique experience. It is the complete awakening from the falsity of division and concentration. It is the freedom of aloneness of the self, which nothing can defile. It is the freedom from the instinctive error of pursuing the truth out of self. This freedom gives silence to the quest, for the light of the self removes the darkness and dispels ignorance.

The word *Bhumā* needs a little explanation. The sense and the joy of expanse is the common promise of mysticism. And whenever life has the freedom from limitation, it has the taste of a new delight of expanse, of an oceanic existence. This joy of unrestricted existence with the consciousness of greater elasticity of being is the attraction of mystic life, and all forms of mysticism afford such joy and such elasticity. But even when enjoying elasticity and freedom, the soul may not have complete freedom. The touch of the little self may still linger, preventing it from the traceless plunge in the deep. The soul may be in tune with the infinite life, it may be life in its endless vistas and perspectives, but still it may not realise the acme of realisation in the Calm. The Upanisads undoubtedly enhance this aspect of mysticism. They notice the unflinching power and vision that invariably accompany mystic realisation, but they are side-lights in comparison with the ideal on which they insist.

*Bhumā* then is not the feeling of expanse which is often the common experience in mystic life. It is not the synthetic vision of reality comprising within it the details of existence in a

dynamical symmetry. Such a vision may be a passing phase on the way to realisation, but it is not the finale of it. In the teachings of Sanat-kumāra and Yājñavalkya, *Bhumā* has the clear sense of transcendent vastness and aloneness. The common idea of a magnitude and unbounded magnitude of *Bhumā* is the idea of an all-inclusive being, but this meaning is rejected in favour of a transcendent oneness in which there is not the least sense of distinction and difference. It is the basic being, beyond perception, beyond understanding. It is the abyss of mystic life, the seeker and the sought vanish alike in the identity of existence. This experience is unique. Certainly it is different from the vision of the synthetic unity of the Infinite. The infinite thread of existence is realised in its finer and finer essence, with greater and deeper penetration. This thread runs through the cosmic existence as the principle of unity, but this form of mystical penetration is surely different from the consciousness whence drops the thread of existence, whence vanish the waves of life in their highest amplitude and greatest magnitude.

This experience is not the experience of vastness as ordinarily understood. It is vast in the sense of the disappearance of the subject-object experience which characterises all finite knowledge. The empirical sense of vastness is not free from the subject-object reference of knowledge. The super-sensuous consciousness is not always free from this reference, though it may be free from the sense-connexion. When knowledge becomes completely free from the subject-object reference, it attains the consummation. Consciousness and being are fully identical here. Their mutual reference and relativity which characterises the mental and supra-mental activities, are fully absent here. And, therefore, this intuition is unique. Its promise is also unique.

## VIGNETTES OF INDIA

By NICHOLAS ROERICH

Is it really India? A thin shore line. Meager little trees. Crevices of dessicated soil. So does India hide its face from the south.

\*

Multicolored is Madura with the remains of Dravidian strata. All the life, all the nerve of the exchange, was near the temple. In the passages of the temple are the bazaar, the court, the sermon, the reciter of the Ramayana, the gossip, and the sacred elephant who wanders in freedom; and the camels of the religious processions. The ingenious stone carving of the temple is colored with the present-day crude colors.

Sarma, the artist, sorrows over it. But the city council did not listen to him, and colored the temple according to their own plan. Sarma is saddened that so much of fine understanding is gone, and has as yet been replaced only by indifference. . . .

Sarma inquires about the condition of artists in Europe and America. He is genuinely surprised that the artists of Europe and America can live by the labor of their hands. It is incomprehensible to him that art can provide a means of livelihood. With them, the occupation of artist is the most profitless one. There are almost no collectors. Sarma himself, tall, in white garments, with sad, calm speech, awaits something better, and knows all the burden of the present. . . . Hard is the life of the Hindu artist. Much resolution is needed in order not to abandon this thorny path. Greetings to the artists of India! Why is it that in all countries of the world the condition of scientists and artists is so precarious?

\*

Thorny also is the way of the Hindu scientists. Here, before us, is an example, in a struggling young scientist, a biologist and pupil of Sir Jagadis Bose.

He began his laboratory in the name of Vivekananda. In his peaceful little house above the laboratory is a room dedicated to the relics of Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, and other teachers of this group. This young man, pupil of the closest pupil of Vivekananda, carries into life the principles of this master, who fearlessly proclaimed his evocation to action and knowledge. In this little top chamber he formulates his thoughts, surrounded by the things which belonged to his beloved leaders. One remembers vividly the portraits of Ramakrishna and his wife. Both faces impress one with their purity and striving. We sat in complete silence near this memorial hearth. Greetings!

\*

Who can explain why the path of knowledge and beauty is the most difficult? Why does humanity accept with such hesitation all that is predestined? It is therefore the greater joy to see in India the signs of an ascent of knowledge and art. It is joyful to see that in India the number of schools is increasing, and that legions of new enlightened workers for science and beauty are ready to serve in the victory of evolution.

\*

In Calcutta, not far behind the city, are two monuments to Ramakrishna. On the shore, Dakshineswar, the Temple, where long lived Ramakrishna. Almost opposite, across the river, is the Mission of Ramakrishna, the mausoleum of the teacher himself, of his wife, of Vivekananda, and a collection of many memorable objects. Vivekananda dreamt that here should be a real Hindu University. Vivekananda took care of this place. There is a great peace here and it is with difficulty one realizes oneself so near to Calcutta with all the terror of its bazaars and confusion. . . .

On the memorable day of Ramakrishna as many as half a million of his admirers gather.

\*

On the shores of the Ganges, a grey-bearded man, cupping his palms like a chalice, offers his entire possessions to the rising sun. A woman quickly telling her rhythms performs her morning *Pranayama* on the shore. In the evening she may again be there, sending upon the stream of the sacred river a garland of lights as prayers for the welfare of her children. And these fire-flies of the woman's soul, prayer-inspired, travel long upon the dark watery surface. Beholding these offerings of the Spirit, one can even forget the stout priests of the golden temples. We are minded of other things. We recall those Yogis who send into space their thoughts, thus constructing the coming evolution. Not the usual priests these, but active hermits; they are bringing our thought near to the energy which will be revealed by scientists in the very near future. . . .

Everywhere, much incense, rose water, and fragrant sandalwood. Hence the smoke from the bodies in the Burning Ghats of Benares is not turbid. And in Tibet, also, cremation is used.

\*

Regard the gentle child games of the Orient—and listen to the complicated rhythms of the chants and soft music. There are not evident the profanities of the West.

\*

Each day a woman's hand molds the sand at the entrance of the house into a special design. This is the symbol that within the house all is well, and there is neither sickness, death nor discord. If there be no happiness in the house then the hand of the woman becomes stilled. A seeming shield of beauty is placed before the house by the hand of the woman at the benevolent hour. And little girls at school early are being taught a variety of designs for the signs of happiness. An inexplicable beauty lives in this custom of India.

Vivekananda called the women of India to work and to freedom. He also asked the so-called Christians, "If you so love the teaching of Jesus why do you not follow it?" So spoke the pupil of Ramakrishna who passed through the substance of all teachings and learned through life "not to deny." Vivekananda was not merely an industrious "Swami"—something lion-like rings in his letters. How he is needed now!

\*

"Buddhism is the most scientific and most coöperative teaching," says the Hindu biologist, Bose. It is a joy to hear how this truly great savant who found his way to the mysteries of plant life speaks about the Vedanta, Mahabharata, and about the poetry of the legends of the Himalaya. Only true knowledge can find the merited place for all existing things. . . .

Bose's mother in her day sold all her jewels in order to give her son an education. The scientist, in demonstrating "His kingdom," says: "Here are the children of the rich in luxurious conditions. See how they become puffed and baggy. They need a good storm to bring them back to healthy normalcy." Knowing the pulse of the plant world, the scientist approaches wholesomely all the manifestations of life. . . . One of Bose's best books was written on the heights of the Punjab in Mayavati—in the shrine of Vivekananda. Vivekananda departed too soon. Bose and Tagore—noble images of India!

\*

Some of the most cosmogonic parts of the Vedas are written by women, and now in India has arrived the epoch of the woman. Greetings to the women of India!

\*

Ramakrishna says: "In Atman there is no distinction of male or female, of Brahmin or Kshatriya and the like."

Ramakrishna executed the work of the sweeper to show, personally, that there were no distinctions.

\*

Sir Jagadis Bose affirms that the

sensitiveness of plants is completely astonishing. As the plants feel the formation of a cloud long before it is visible to the eye, so the East feels the thought at its inception.

\*

In the close interrelation between the visible and the invisible, and in the epic simplicity of their interplay, lies the charm of India.

\*

In sudden support of fundamental Buddhism, the realist of realists, Huxley, says, "No one but a superficial thinker rejects the teaching of reincarnation as nonsense. Like the teaching of evolution itself, reincarnation has its roots in the world of reality and is entitled to the same support commanded by every consideration which evolves from analogies."

\*

L. Horn writes: "With the acceptance of the teachings of evolution, the old forms of thought everywhere are crumbling. New ideas arise in the place of outlived dogmas, and we have before us the spectacle of a general intellectual movement in a direction becoming ever more strange, parallel with Eastern philosophy.

"The unheard of speed and variety of the scientific progress current in the last fifty years cannot but call forth an equally unprecedented hastening of thought in the broad non-scientific circles of society. That the highest and most complete organisms develop out of the simplest organisms; that upon one physical basis of life stands the whole living world; that there cannot be traced a line which divides animal and vegetable kingdoms; that the difference between life and non-life is a difference in gradation and not substance—all this already has become commonplace in the new philosophy. After the recognition of physical evolution it is not difficult to say that the acknowledgment of psychic evolution is only a question of time."

The observation of the East astonishes and rejoices one. And not the

obvious power of observation which leads to a dead stereotype but observation, fine and silent in its substance. One remembers how the teacher asked the newly arriving pupil to describe a room, but the room was empty and in a vessel was swimming only a tiny fish. In three hours the pupil wrote three pages, but the teacher rejected him, saying that about this one little fish he could have written all his life. In technical imitation is revealed the same sharp observation. In the adaptation of the meter of a song, in the character of a call, in movements, you see an all-powerful culture. Somewhere the Hindus enveloped in their mantles were compared to Roman senators. This is an inane comparison. Rather liken them to the philosophers of Greece, and still better, call them the creators of the Upanishads, Bhagavad-Gita, Mahabharata. For neither Rome nor Greece existed when India was flourishing. The latest excavations begin to support this indubitable deduction.

\*

Hindus regard objects of art with fine understanding. From a Hindu you naturally expect an interesting approach and unusual remarks, and so it is. Therefore to show paintings to a Hindu is a real joy. How captivatingly they approach art! Do not think that they are occupied only in its contemplation. You will be astonished by their remarks about tonality, about technique, and about the expressiveness of the line. If the observer be long silent, do not think that he has become tired. On the contrary, this is a good sign. It means he has entered into a mood, and one can expect from him especially interesting deductions. Sometimes he will tell you a whole parable. And there will be nothing vulgar or crude about it. It is astonishing how transformed are the people of the East before the creations of art. Indeed it is more difficult for a European to enter into the current of creation, and as a rule he is less able to synthesize his impression.

India, I know thy sorrows, but I shall remember thee with the same joyous tremor as the first flower on the spring meadow. From thy Brahmins we shall select the greatest who understood the Vedic wisdom. We shall select the Rajah who strove for the finding of the path of truth. We shall notice Vaishya and Shudra who have exalted their craft, and labor for the upliftment of the world. A boiling kettle is the forge of India. The dagger of faith over a white goat. The phantom flame of a bonfire over a widow. Conjurations and sorcery. Complicated are the folds

of thy garments, India. Menacing are thy vestures blown by the whirlwind. And deadly burning are thy inclement rocks, India. But we know thy fragrant essences. India, we know the depth and finesse of thy thoughts. We know the great AUM, which leads to the inexpressible Heights. We know thy great Guiding Spirit, India, we know thy ancient wisdom! Thy sacred scriptures in which is outlined the past, the present, the future. And we shall remember thee with the same tremor as the most precious first flower on the spring meadow.

## VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN GERMANY AND FRANCE

By SHIV CHANDRA DATTA, M.A., B.L., F. R. ECON. S.

Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar (whose views we are considering here) attaches great importance to education as being helpful towards bringing out what is best in every man or nation. The spread of education, general or technical, and the heightening of the standard of education he regards as important because education is one of the many factors which contribute to the efficiency of a people. "There are many other factors besides education which play a *formative force* in the human personality. But all the same, the importance of education, literary, scientific and technical, in *individual or collective efficiency*, cannot be entirely ignored. In no scientific study of a *people's working capacity* or *possibilities of achievement* should it be reasonable to leave out of consideration its educational institutions, *primary, secondary, university and professional*." (*Comperative Pedagogics*, p. 1).

While in no way ignoring the importance of general education in contributing to the efficiency of a people, Prof. Sarkar attaches the very greatest importance to vocational education because of its very great help in contributing to the individual greatness of a people. It will be remembered that we have already mentioned that, according

to him, advanced vocational education constitutes one of the factors which lie at the foundations of modern economic life.

Prof. Sarkar has carried on a first-hand study of the educational institutions and systems of almost all the advanced countries, with more or less intensity. So far as vocational education is concerned, he has paid the greatest attention to the systems prevailing in Germany and France, and next to these, to those prevailing in Great Britain, the U.S.A., Japan, Italy and the U.S.S.R. We shall deal with the vocational education prevailing in the advanced countries in the order mentioned, and after that we shall close with a few remarks and statistics about general and professional education and educational finance.

In studying the facts and figures given in this connection, however, it should be borne in mind that the factual contents of the terms 'schools', 'colleges', 'universities', 'higher' or 'lower' professional institutions, etc., are not absolutely the same in the countries under consideration and also that considerable adjustment in the official figures had to be made by Prof.

Sarkar in order to bring them down to a more uniform basis.

### GERMANY<sup>1</sup>

Vocational education in Germany may be discussed under three broad headings: (1) Commercial Education, (2) Technical Education and (3) Agricultural Education.

#### (1) COMMERCIAL EDUCATION

As regards commercial education there are four grades of institutions in Germany. At the top are 5 Commercial Colleges. Below them are 35 higher Schools of Commerce. The third rank is occupied by the Secondary Schools of Commerce which are 57 in number. The lowest type of institutions of this class are the 70 lower Schools of Commerce.

The first class represents 'the highest type of educational institution in the commercial line'. In 1925 there were 7091 students prosecuting studies in these institutions. The second class is meant for those 'who are expected to take a leading part in commercial or industrial life' either as employees or as independent businessmen. In 1919 there were 600 boys and 1300 girls in these institutions. Students in these schools are 18 or above and are Gymnasium-passed.<sup>2</sup> The third class of schools are but Secondary Schools proper with special compulsory commercial classes. They have been set up only in order to create in the students a special taste for commerce. These schools had a total of 5,082 students in 1921. The students are generally below 18. The lowest class of the Commercial Schools are meant for

the turning out of efficient office-clerks. The minimum age of students of these schools is 14. And the minimum qualification is the elementary school final certificate. In 1919, 2,100 boys and 6,900 girls were studying in these institutions.

#### (2) TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Technical education is imparted in three types of institutions: the Technical Universities, the Continuation Schools and the Subjects-Schools.

*Technical Universities:* In 1925 there were 10 Technical Hochschulen ('High Schools', equivalent to the Universities of ordinary parlance) in Germany with 26,126 scholars.

*Continuation Schools:* In Germany every boy or girl below 18, who has finished education in the compulsory elementary public school (teaching students between 6 and 14 and having the same standard as the Matric Schools of India) and is engaged as a worker in some establishment, is required by law to attend some school or other in order that he or she may acquire higher education in the technical line to which he or she belongs. The teaching is *free of charge*. The schools set up for this purpose are known as Continuation Schools, as they help the further prosecution of studies in a particular line after the completion of education in the elementary schools. Students are required to undergo training in the schools for a period varying from one to four years according to the school attended.

Further particulars regarding these schools will appear from the following figures (*Comparative Pedagogics*, p. 25):

			Institutions	Scholars
1920	Trade Schools ...	...	850	140,000
1910	Industrial Schools	...	3,600	540,000
1922	Factory Schools	...	95	13,738
...	Railway Schools	...	...	...
1912	Government Mining Schools (Saar)	...	56	4,190
1912	" (Upper Silesia)	...	...	1,059
1922	Mansfeld Mining Schools	...	70	2,000

<sup>1</sup> *Economic Development*, Chaps. 12, 29, 30, 31 and 44.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., holders of the Secondary School final certificate.

		Institutions	Scholars
Westphal Mining Schools ...	...	120	5,000
Rural Schools ...	...	...	...
Women's Schools ...	...	...	...
		<hr/> 4,791	<hr/> 705,987

The general characteristics common to these Continuation Schools are : (i) the students of these schools are actual employees and attend the schools for a few hours (varying from 5 to 12) every week ; (ii) the students are generally between 14 and 18 ; and (iii) whatever be the subjects studied, three courses are almost universal in all the different varieties of these schools : physical exercise, gymnastics, sports, excursions, etc ; civics<sup>3</sup> ; a course in German.

The expenses of these schools are borne by the state or the cities. But the industrial guilds, unions of artisans, chambers of commerce, trading corporations, etc., are also compelled to provide for them.

These schools are under the control of the Ministries of Commerce, Industry, Forestry and Agriculture, and to a very slight extent under that of Education. From this it appears that greater importance is attached to the *economic* than to the *educational* aspect of these institutions. That is, these institutions have a definite economic purpose to serve.

Prof. Sarkar remarks as follows on these Continuation Schools : "These are the various agencies through which the peasants, working men, as well as the lower middle classes of Germany, are being educated not only to become *efficient hands and feet of German economic life*, but also to grow up into *able-bodied and patriotic citizens* for the 'Fatherland'."

*Subjects-Schools (Fachschulen)* : These schools are intended to impart training in various technical subjects, These are not part-time like the Continuation Schools, but are whole-time. Apart from the schools of mining, most of these are run either by the state or the cities. The scholars are usually 18 or above. Previous practical experience for definite periods is insisted upon before admission. Prof. Sarkar would like to call these schools as Intermediate Technical Colleges.

The various classes of Subjects-Schools, their number and the number of scholars reading in them will appear from the following figures :

		Institutions	Scholars
1921	Schools of Architecture ...	60	12,780
1922	" " Metal Industry ...	35	...
1922	" " Manufacture ...	1	...
	" " Spinning and Weaving ...	...	...
1922	" " Industrial Arts ...	85	...
1924	" " Mining (Prussia) ...	11	1,759
1924	" " Navigation ...	12	1,658

Schools of architecture teach both overground and underground architecture. Schools of metal industry are of two classes : those which teach mecha-

nical engineering and those which impart education in smithies of various sorts, the tin-man's trade, installations of all sorts, etc. Schools of manufacture are practically the same as those of mechanical engineering. The only difference is that while the latter lay stress on machines, pulleys, levers, etc., the former lay stress on technology, *i.e.*, on the following subjects : raw materials,

<sup>3</sup> "Civics implies not only the knowledge of general economic, political and legal conditions but also the study of the cultural institutions of the country such as museums, galleries, theatres, exhibitions, zoological gardens, scientific discoveries, etc."

measuring instruments and machine-tools, the chemistry of manufacture, foundry work, smithy, dyeing, installation of workshops, management of factories and book-keeping. Schools of spinning and weaving teach subjects such as the following: silk and velvet manufacture; manufacture of ribbon, lace, etc.; dress-making, spinning and weaving in wool, cotton, linen, etc.; hand-weaving (taught in a school in Silesia); the commercial side of the textile industry; textile technology and chemistry. Some of these schools are very highly specialized. There are two grades of textile schools: (a) those which aim at turning out expert workmen and (b) those which aim at producing expert managers, directors, etc., of textile factories. The schools of industrial arts and handicrafts are meant for the following classes of artisans: carpenters and manufacturers of furniture, house-decorators, painters, modellers, sculptors in wood and stone, wood-carvers, metal workers, die-cutters, blacksmiths, silver and goldsmiths, enamel-workers, designers, painters of advertisements, printers and compositors, book-binders, glass-painters, glass-cutters, and porcelain artists. For women there are special classes in these schools in weaving, knitting, needlework, embroidery of all sorts, clothing fashions and garment-making. The artistic, technical and the commercial aspects are emphasized in all these schools. Industrial legislation and civics also are taught. The schools of mining impart instruction in anthracite mining, as also in the mining of brown coal, iron ore, salt ore, iron and other metals as well as of slates. Eleven schools are run by mining associations under the control of the state and only 1 is run by the state. Out of 30,000 mining engineers and mine officials in Germany 12,000 are the products of these schools. The schools of navigation impart instruction in the following different classes of navigation: coasting navigation, short-distance shipping, fishing in high seas, piloting, high i.e., long-distance shipping.

In the case of the other *Fachschulen* the period of instruction varies from 2 to 4 years, but in the case of the schools of navigation the period of instruction varies from 2 weeks in the case of coasting navigation to 20 weeks in the case of long-distance shipping and 40 weeks in the case of piloting. The average number of students annually undergoing instruction in the various branches of navigation between 1910 and 1913, will appear from the following figures: coasting—200; short-distance shipping—286; high sea fishing—61; piloting—665; long-distance shipping—456. It appears that the largest number of students take to piloting and long-distance shipping.

Besides the above, there are special schools for special industries. These schools impart instruction in the following special industries: (a) smithies, (b) installations, (c) instruments and machine tools, (d) clocks and watches, (e) precious metals, (f) wood-carving, (g) toys, (h) musical instruments, (i) willow-reeds, (j) chemical engineering, (k) paper manufacture (l) dyeing, (m) soap-making, (n) bricks and tiles, (o) porcelain, (p) glass, (q) photography, (r) leather industry, (s) garment-making, (t) food-products, (u) hotel management.

These schools belong to the same type as the schools for industrial arts and crafts already mentioned. Unlike the Continuation Schools, however, both these classes are meant for students who are not engaged in earning their bread. But, while the age of students in the schools for industrial arts and handicrafts is about 18, that of students entering into the schools for special industries is about 14. Most of these schools are run by the state, but some are run by manufacturers' associations and private individuals.

Prof. Sarkar's remarks on the *Fachschulen* (Subjects-Schools) of Germany are highly interesting and instructive and deserve to be quoted at length:

"The industrialization of Germany as that of other countries has been brought



about by many factors. As a rule outsiders cast their eyes on the *Technische Hochschulen*, technical high schools or colleges, which academically and socially enjoy the rank of universities, as the chief if not the sole spiritual sources of Germany's industrial might.

"On an intensive examination, however, one should be inclined to revise one's impressions and judgments. One discovers that Germany is a veritable jungle of industrial, professional and other institutions. Their name is legion and they are bewilderingly complex.

"It is this vast number of technical schools of all denominations, distributed as they are in every nook and corner of Germany, that has democratized inventions, discoveries, industrial skill, practical experience and scientific knowledge among the masses of the German population. The backbone of industrial Germany is built upon the nurture furnished by these schools, which although bearing the modest name of a *schule*, i.e., school, as contrasted with a 'high' school, have not failed to maintain a standard of tuition sufficiently high, as may enable the scholars to take charge of factories and workshops as responsible *Fachmanner* or experts.

"*'Industrial research'* is a problem for which perhaps in most cases the best equipment can be secured in a *technische hochschule*. In order to equip oneself, further, as a teacher of industries for a technical institution one generally provides oneself with the training and discipline such as are available in a *technische hochschule*. But those whose chief interest lies in the building up of factories and workshops find their aims invariably best served in such technical schools as are known as *fachschulen*, 'Subjects-Schools.' "

### (8) AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

The various grades of agricultural institutions are adapted to the standard of education attained by the entrants.

Those who have passed from the Secondary Schools (their academic standing is the same as that of Indian

Intermediates) may study either in the Agricultural Universities or in the Agricultural Seminars.

The Agricultural Universities are 18 in number. Of these 4 are self-contained Agricultural Universities in the strict sense of the term. They are located at Berlin, Bonn, Hohenheim and Weihenstephan. Eight are but Agricultural Institutes attached to the ordinary Universities viz., the Universities at Königsberg, Breslau, Halle, Göttingen, Kiel, Leipzig, Jena and Giessen. The *Technische Hochschule* at Munich has an agricultural branch attached to it. All the Agricultural Universities are maintained by the Government. These Universities confer the degree of the Doctor of Philosophy on the successful students.

There are in all 11 Seminars for Agriculturists. While the course in the Universities is for 3 years, that in the Seminar is for 1 year only. Hence, these Seminars better meet the needs of practical agriculturists who have neither the time nor the money to get instruction from the Universities. The Seminar-passed men are fit to take independent charge of large agricultural undertakings. Officials of the Government agricultural departments are also recruited from them.

The *Volksschule*-passed men (i.e., those who have passed from the elementary schools equivalent to the Indian Matriculation standard) can study agriculture in either of three classes of institutions: (a) the real Agricultural Schools; (b) the Continuation Schools; and (c) the Secondary Schools of Agriculture.

The first class is meant for the actual tillers of the soil. These are 450 in number. Of these 30 are held throughout the year, while 420 are held only in the winter. The winter schools are very popular for two reasons. First, they enable the sons of peasants to assist their parents in agricultural work in summer. Secondly, they are less expensive than the 80 whole-time schools. During summer the teachers of winter

schools visit the fields of the farmers along with the students and help the farmers with their advice. The teachers serve as the connecting links between theoretical knowledge and practical experience and also between village life and the outer world.

Those *Volksschule*-passed boys who have already taken to some paid agricultural employment are compelled by law to undergo training in agriculture for four years in the Continuation Schools of agriculture. The teaching in these schools is imparted side by side with the employment of the students, and is given free of charge. The employers have to bear the expenses.

Boys who have completed their career in the *Volksschulen* may enter those secondary schools which, while teaching general subjects, lay special emphasis on agriculture. These secondary schools of agriculture (Prof. Sarkar calls them as 'semi'-agricultural schools) appear to be of the same type as the secondary schools of commerce which are meant to create a taste for commerce. There are 21 such schools in Germany.

Apart from the above, there are other agricultural schools which only teach special agricultural subjects. These specialized agricultural schools are of two classes: those which admit students who have proceeded up to the secondary school standard, and those which take in students who have passed from the elementary schools. To the former class belong the higher schools of gardening and the schools of land-improvement. Students trained in the schools of gardening are in high demand as gardeners or inspectors of parks and gardens. Scholars passed from the latter schools are known as 'improvement technologists' and 'meadow architects'. Their services are utilized in effecting land-improvements, i.e., in works such as the draining and the reclamation of lands.

The lower specialized schools of agriculture include 80 lower schools of gardening, 8 schools of horse-breeding, a few cattle-breeding schools, 3 schools

of swine-culture, 6 schools of bird-culture, a few bee-culture, pisciculture and sea-fishery schools, 12 dairy schools (to train milk-men and 'milk-officers'), etc. Besides, there are special schools to teach various agricultural industries such as the manufacture of alcohol, sugar, etc., and also to teach milling and baking. The sugar schools train up sugar chemists and sugar engineers. The milling and baking schools are meant for (i) workmen in milling and baking shops, (ii) teachers of vocational schools requiring training in milling and baking, and (iii) officers of customs-houses. The 60 horse-shoeing schools (none can practise horse-shoeing in Germany without a proper certificate of competency), the schools for office-bearers and accountants (to take charge of agricultural institutions and organizations), the schools of agricultural co-operation (to train men to properly discharge the executive duties in connection with the running of agricultural co-operative societies) and the forestry schools,—are also classed under the lower specialized agricultural schools.<sup>4</sup>

#### FRANCE

Higher professional education in France is imparted in the following institutions: (1) Conservatoire des Arts et Metiers, Paris; (2) Ecole Centrale des Arts et Manufacturers, Paris; (3) Ecole des hautes etudes commerciaux, Paris; (4) 15 higher schools of commerce with 3,161 scholars (1924); (5) Ecole Polytechnique; (6) 4 Ecoles des Mines (Paris, St. Etienne, Alais, Duai); (7) Ecole des Ponts et Chaurses, Paris; (8) Ecoles des Beaux-Arts; (9) Naval

<sup>4</sup> Women in Germany can join the ordinary schools of commerce, industry and agriculture on equal terms with men. There are also special professional schools for women. An idea of these special schools has been given in connection with the discussion of "The Economic Independence of Modern Women" ("P. B." for Aug. 1930, pp. 398-394.) Further details, which are intensely interesting, may be looked up in Ch. 19 of Prof. Sarkar's *Economic Development*.

Schools; (10) Military School. (*Comparative Pedagogics*, p. 6).

Higher professional education is also imparted in the science-faculties of the universities. Most of the universities (at Aix, Besancon, Clermont-Ferrand, Lille, Lyon, Montpellier, Nancy, Poitiers, Toulouse, Paris, Marseilles, Rennes, Bordeaux, Dijon, Grenoble, etc.) offer technical courses in one or more of the following technical subjects: electricity, chemistry, oecology, entomology, agriculture, viticulture, brewery, dairy-farming, geology, aerotechnology, tannery, agricultural chemistry, watch-making, paper-making, etc. Of the numerous universities 8 alone (those at Grenoble, Nancy and Toulouse) possess very big technical departments. In 1911 the latter three granted 806 diplomas in technical subjects, while all the others put together issued only 69. (*Economic Development*, pp. 2-3).

Of the total number of 2,000 engineers usually turned out every year in France, only about 400 come out of the universities. The rest come from specialized technical and engineering colleges. In addition to the 2,000 already mentioned 400 engineers on an average come out every year as a result of practical experience in factories and workshops. "Technical education in France therefore is primarily a function of extra-University educational institutions."

Intermediate Technical Education in France is imparted in the following institutions:

1. Six 'national' (i.e., paid for by the Central Government) engineering colleges at Paris, Aix, Angers-on-the Loire, Chalons-on-the-Marne, Lille, and Cheny. The training given is of a character intended to turn out directing heads of factories, engineers and industrialists connected with mechanical workshops etc. The course is for 3 years. Students seeking admission must be between 16 and 19, must show secondary school final certificate and must have practical industrial experience.

2. Five<sup>5</sup> Free Professional Schools. These also are run by the Central Government. No fees are charged. The course is for 4 years. Students are between 12 and 15. These schools are but lower schools of engineering and they prepare students for the higher engineering colleges. The number of scholars in 1926 was 2,586.

3. Eighty-two Free Schools of Commerce and Industry. Sixty-five are for boys and 17 for girls. The total number of scholars in 1925 was 42,409.

The object of these schools is to turn out qualified apprentices. They admit permanent as well as external students. The external students are those who work in neighbouring factories. The course is for 3 years. Students are between 12 and 15. The first two years are given to primary school subjects. Professional subjects are taught in the third year. The subjects taught vary according to the character of the local industries. The various subjects taught make an imposing list and we give them here: mechanics, designing, descriptive geometry, electricity; geography, accounting and the study of goods; watch and clock-making; printing and typography; weaving; hotel-running; ceramics; timber-work; lithography; marine engineering; boiler work; industrial chemistry; 'fitting'; cabinet-making; Colonial economics; locksmith's trade; founding; gunsmith's work; industrial electricity; modelling; sculpture in wood; spinning, bleaching and dyeing; lace-making; cutlery; gloves-making; spectacles manufacturing; manufacture of combs, celluloid articles, shoes, etc; drapery; lead-work; zinc-plating, etc.

4. For agricultural education there are various types of institutions. First of all are the three big agricultural colleges (at Grignon, Montpellier and Rennes) run by the Central Government. The teaching imparted enables students to become either actual farmers or teachers of agriculture. Actual culti-

<sup>5</sup> The number given in *Comparative Pedagogics* (p. 7) is 56.

vation as well as the supervision of the farms is taught. No Government post is guaranteed to the passed scholars. Students seeking admission must be at least 17. In two of the colleges the course is for 2½ years; in the third it is for 2 years. The students passed are known as agricultural engineers.

Then there are the 26 agricultural schools, all run by the Central Government, and the 7 schools to teach special subjects such as horticulture, dairy-farming, wine-manufacturing, etc. Moreover, there are 65 winter schools. Of these 80 are peripatetic and 85 'fixed'. There are again 48 institutions combining tuition in both housekeeping and agriculture. Of these 46 are peripatetic and 2 'fixed'.

There is a special women's school for agriculture. The course is for 1 year and the students admitted must not be under 16. The school has a special department for the training of teachers. The trained teachers are fit to be instructors in the housekeeping-cum-agricultural institutions. Teachers under training are maintained by the Government.

5. Three veterinary colleges. Students seeking admission must be at least 17 and must be either secondary school-passed or agricultural engineers. The course is for 4 years.<sup>6</sup>

Lower professional education in France is imparted in the following institutions :

	Scholars
35 Schools of Industries ...	5,550
18 Municipal Professional Schools in Paris ...	1,885
370 Private Schools ...	92,000

<sup>6</sup> On the commercial, agricultural, technical and veterinary colleges of France see Chaps. 1 and 2 of *Economic Development*.

The total number of scholars in the lower Professional Schools is 98,985.

Having described the various types of technical institutions in France we would wind up our treatment of vocational education in that country with a few general remarks (vide *Economic Development*, Ch. 3) :

1. Vocational education in France is mostly a state affair. The expenses are borne and the institutions are administered mostly by the state. Some institutions are run by the local bodies and the chambers of commerce. Considerable mutual assistance is rendered as between the Government schools and the 'Communal' schools (i.e., those run by the 'Communes').

2. Strict Government control is exercised over private institutions. Advisory Boards (consisting of the most prominent among local merchants, industrialists, bankers, etc.) are associated with the educational institutions in order to keep the latter 'in daily contact with the currents of active commercial life'. Honorary non-official visitors, nominated or elected because of the part they play in agriculture, industry or commerce, supplement the work of Government Inspectors of Schools.

3. Technical education in France was reorganized after the War. A law (The loi Astier) was passed in 1919 to effect that reorganization. Under that law every person below 18 is compelled to undergo some sort or other of technical education. The education is imparted free of cost. Factories are compelled to extend proper facilities to their workmen to enable them to prosecute their studies. Factory-owners may start their own schools.

*"India has to learn from Europe the conquest of external nature, and Europe has to learn from India the conquest of internal nature."*

—Swami Vivekananda.

# SWAMI BRAHMANANDA THE SPIRITUAL SON OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

By SWAMI SATPRAKASHANANDA

(Continued from the last issue)

In the world's history, no religious head has perhaps been so highly revered, so dearly loved, so devotedly served and so implicitly obeyed by his fellow-disciples or the entire body of monastic and lay devotees under him as Swami Vivekananda and Swami Brahmananda. His brother-disciples' reverence for Swami Brahmananda almost amounted to adoration. To them he was almost the very embodiment of their Master. He was their chosen 'king', their beloved 'Maharaj'. We have already referred to the high esteem in which Swami Vivekananda held him. He called him 'a mountain of spirituality.' He took his counsel in all important matters. He vested him with sole authority over the Order founded by himself, saying: "Everything belongs to you, Raja, I am nobody." He looked upon him as a true successor of Sri Ramakrishna. It was also his desire that so long as Rakhal lived, none else of his *Gurubhāis* would be elected President of the Ramakrishna Order. Of all the *Gurubhāis* Swami Ramakrishnananda's love for and devotion to the Maharaj were most marked. To him he was the veritable child of Sri Ramakrishna. In fact, he made no distinction between the father and the son. He was often heard to say: "He who has seen the son has also seen the father." Once, in Madras, the Maharaj wanted to take fruits, but unfortunately there was no fruit in the Ashrama at the time to offer him. Just then a devotee brought some apples, grapes, bananas, etc., to be offered to Sri Ramakrishna. But Swami Ramakrishnananda at once offered half of them to the Maharaj with the gentle remark: "To offer these fruits to the Maharaj is as good as offering them to Sri Ramakrishna, for Sri

Ramakrishna eats through his mouth." He kept the other half for Sri Ramakrishna to be offered to him at the *Pujā* time. One day, while the Maharaj was at Balaram Babu's house in a weak state of health, Swami Ramakrishnananda, noticing that there was none to attend on him, shampooed his feet in spite of the Maharaj's remonstrances. Swami Turiyananda, Swami Trigunatita, Swami Premananda, Swami Saradananda and other chosen disciples of Sri Ramakrishna had also the same veneration for him. It has been already noted that the major portion of the Maharaj's itinerant life was spent in the company of Swami Turiyananda, who always made it a point to look after the Maharaj's needs and convenience as far as practicable in the hard life of renunciation and *tapasyā*. At Brindaban he would not allow the Maharaj to go abegging. He used to beg his own food as well as that of the Maharaj going from door to door. Swami Premananda used to say: "When I hear that brother Rakhal is going to be absent from the Math, I feel a void within myself." But this reverence of the brother-monks was not characterised by an awful solemnity. It was blended with the intimacy and sweetness of genuine love. The Maharaj also in his turn looked upon them as the chosen children of the Master and gave them all the honour and love relative to such an attitude. Truly, in this divine relationship of the *Gurubhāis* veneration was mingled with affection, service with devotion, intimacy with regard, obedience with dignity, command with tenderness, faith with understanding and admiration with conviction.

One can imagine from this what reverence, love, faith and service the Maharaj commanded from others who were

attracted by the name and personality of Sri Ramakrishna and his disciples. They vied with one another to do him homage and service. His word was the command divine. To be in his presence was a blessing. A kind look, a word or a touch was a benediction and inspiration to be treasured for ever in memory.

The secret of this unique position was perhaps his childlike simplicity and impersonality of nature. He was really a child divine—a veritable son of the Lord. He was a master without any idea of mastery, a ruler without any feeling of rulership. He was rarely heard to talk about himself. In all his conversations there was hardly any reference to his own deeds and achievements. Though the supreme leader of a religious organisation of most rapid and extensive growth with multifarious activities in several parts of the world, he was never seen to command but to suggest. Indeed, he was an agent without the conceit of the doer in him. In the language of the *Gītā*, he found inaction in action and action in inaction. Swami Premananda, who was long in charge of the Belur Monastery, writes in course of a private letter: "Though an agent, one should live like a non-agent. The character of Swami Brahmananda has made me realise this to some extent." In fact though a master in all outward appearance Swami Brahmananda had a serviceful attitude towards those under him. He looked after their physical needs and comforts with parental care. He could not bear the idea that young *Sannyāsins* should hazard their health by undergoing too much austerities and make themselves unfit for the spiritual pursuits for which they had left their hearth and home. Decent food, clothes, etc., on the other hand, he thought, would maintain their physical and mental vigour intact and enable them to make a strenuous effort to attain to the goal. He wanted to give them all facilities for spiritual development. In conducting the activities of the Order, the

mere management and extension of work had far less claim on his attention than the individual spiritual growth of the members engaged in the work. The thought of their spiritual advancement had been uppermost in his mind. He would not appoint a worker to a work that would hamper his spiritual growth anyway, though from the consideration of mere work that would have been the best step. The real growth of a religious order, he knew within himself, rests on the spiritual progress of each individual member. Thus, by promoting the spiritual culture of the individuals, he furthered the growth of the Order as a whole without making any conscious effort for it. His life is a lesson for those who in their solicitude for the expansion of an association loses sight of the well-being of the individuals and thus defeat their own purpose.

Beneath all these there was a perennial flow of love with a silent equable course unknown and unnoticed. There was not the least turbulence in it. The lover and the loved seemed to be equally unconscious of its existence. Gently and quietly it made its way into the hearts of all who gathered round him and held them under sway. Swami Premananda once wrote in course of a letter: "As the Master had completely won the Maharaj and the rest of his disciples by his supreme love, so the Maharaj has in his turn made the sons of others his own by his wonderful love. At his bidding they go anywhere and everywhere and exert themselves to the verge of death simply because of his love." His noble genial loving nature made him the centre of attraction wherever he went. People of heterogeneous temperaments gathered round him not always for the sake of religion but for the pleasure of his blessed company. He looked after their personal and domestic welfare and gratified them by presents of flowers, fruits, vegetables, a piece of cloth or a titbit according to their needs and liking. These tokens of love, trifling as they often were, testified to those who received

them only the depth of his love and its genuineness. He took great delight in feeding others and with delicacies which they would relish most. At Benares and Kankhal he sumptuously fed a number of up-country *Sādhus* with Bengali sweets and dishes the like of which they said they had never tasted before. As a matter of fact, there was constant festivity wherever he went. A circle of devotees and admirers formed itself at every place and fulfilled the wishes of this chosen child of the Lord. Indeed, in his life was verified the truth of the following text of the *Bhāgavatam*: "Those who realise the eternal presence of the Lord in their heart are endowed with perpetual good and beauty, and their life is imbued with an eternal festive joy."

Never did he pose as a religious preacher or teacher. He did not talk much on spiritual matters either because he held them too high and sacred or because his gentle nature oftentimes shrank from the attitude of a teacher. Never in his life he gave a formal discourse on religion. Whenever he spoke on it, he did it in a mood of inspiration in course of ordinary conversation. If a religious question was put to him, he would generally avoid it, humorously pointing to someone of his *Gurubhāis* or a learned younger *Swāmi* who happened to be near by as the fit person to answer it. At times with his usual mirthfulness, he would introduce a light topic or create a fun, in the course of which he would disclose a spiritual truth or give a hint or suggestion which would solve the doubt of the questioner and not unoften change his outlook on life for ever. These were matters of almost everyday occurrence. To all appearance, he was as merry and playful as a child and possessed an inexhaustible fund of jokes and fun in which he often indulged. Sometimes he would take a special fancy for someone no matter what his social rank or condition or age, and fondle him as his own playmate.

Behind all gaiety and jollity there was

an undercurrent of spiritual consciousness which nothing could thwart or impede. Many a time it was observed that while merriment was in full swing, an expression of genuine religious feeling by any of the audience would bring about a sudden and complete change in the tide of things. His soft cheerful countenance would appear grave and solemn and a perfect serenity would fill the atmosphere. His natural inwardness of mind also exhibited itself in the occasional moods of absorption into which he passed while listening to a random conversation or smoking the *hookāh*, as well as in his dignified and sober demeanour which commanded willing reverence.

But the ceaseless flow of spiritual consciousness was all the more apparent in his transcendent aloofness. Though in body, he was not of the body. He loved all, he mixed with all, he had interest in everything; yet he soared far and beyond. Perchance, to describe the indescribable, things floated in his consciousness not as bubbles of no worth, but as modes of the same entity. He viewed things neither in the grossness of limited reals nor in the homogeneity of pure existence. With name and form he realised the infinitude of each. Thus, though living apart as a spectator, he had an ineffable love and sympathy for all. This witness-like attitude was so remarkable a feature of his personality that it could not escape even casual notice. Thus observes Sister Devamata in her *Days in an Indian Monastery*: "Wherever he (Swami Brahmananda) went, people came in large numbers to bow at his feet and beg his blessing; but it seemed to reach his consciousness only impersonally, as if it had merely a casual acquaintance with the one who was being honoured."

In spite of his wonted reserve he liked to commune with the earnest seekers of truth. If anyone had real trouble or difficulty in spiritual life, he was ever ready to help him. To many he gave private instructions, but only after he had been convinced of their sincerity

and earnestness. His attitude in this respect has been best described by himself. Said he one day to an intimate group of devotees: "There are many who request me to bless them. I cannot help laughing within myself when I hear them. They don't do as I instruct them. In fact, the moment they leave my presence, they do whatever they like. . . . They want to attain spiritual realisation without the necessary exertion. Don't you see when such people come, I usually while away the time in aimless talk—in cracking jokes and making fun? What is the use of tiring myself for nothing, in speaking of spiritual practices to people who won't follow them? I speak of higher matters only to a very few, who I think would take my word and act up to it. But even they don't follow the instructions fully and properly."

Besides giving general and individual religious instructions to earnest seekers of truth he gave spiritual initiation to a selected few. He gave also *Sannyāsa* and *Brahmacharya* every year to selected candidates for monastic life, after a period of probation, generally on the birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. These memorable ceremonies of formal admission into the Holy Order were held mostly at Belur. But Benares, Bhubaneswar, Madras, Bangalore and certain other places also have witnessed the blessed functions. Besides the *Vedic* form of *Sannyāsa* he also gave a *Tāntrika* form of *Sannyāsa* called *Purnābhisheka* to a few, specially to some householders who were debarred from the former. But in the matter of giving initiation (*dikshā*), in accepting one as a true disciple, he was particularly strict and discriminative. He refused almost all when they approached him for the first time. If he found anyone deserving it, he would give him a preparatory lesson after the aspirant's persistent prayer for four or five years. The final initiation would come in some cases after seven to ten years, after the aspirant's steadiness and earnestness had been fully tested and his

eagerness for truth roused to the extreme. But once he accepted him as a disciple he would stand by him for good until the disciple reached the very shores of Immortal Bliss. The following words of his really reveal the speaker himself: "He is the best *Guru*, who, whether his physical body stands or falls, will see that everyone of his disciples attains liberation. The speciality of this age is that even after the disappearance of his physical body, the *Guru* appears in flesh to his disciples to guide and bless them."

He loved his disciples in spite of their faults and weaknesses. If any of them went astray under the influence of evil tendencies (*samskāras*), he would not reproach or despise him, but like a fond mother feel for him more deeply, watch him inwardly and bless him all the more. Sometimes he would send for him and call him to his side not to warn or chastise him but to wean him from the evil course by making him feel the holy attraction of his personality and infusing into him sufficient spiritual strength to fight against the *samskāras*. He could ill brook any criticism of the beloved disciple from others. In giving initiation he took into consideration only the aspirant's spiritual consciousness, his yearning for the highest good, and never thought of his position, rank, learning or sex. Monks and householders, men and women, the high and the low equally shared his grace in this respect. While men of worldly greatness without spiritual hankering were summarily dismissed, he most willingly initiated the meanest of the mean if he saw in him any real spiritual thirst. He once initiated one of the menials in the service of an admirer of his. While the Maharaj was at Bangalore, Mr. K. L. Datta, the then Accountant-General of Madras, who happened to be there at the time, paid him occasional visits. He had great regard for the Maharaj and used to send him certain delicacies of a Bengali home through a servant of his, probably a Nepalese youngman. The Maharaj perceived the religious instinct of the boy and talked with him on



spiritual things whenever he came. The youth in his turn realised the Maharaj's holy influence, but he did not dare to ask for his grace. One day the Maharaj called him to the shrine-room and gave him initiation.

He initiated his disciples according to individual spiritual character. Every man has to grow spiritually and realise the Truth in his own way as determined by his inherent tendencies. The Maharaj's psychic faculty was wonderfully developed. Some of the visions and experiences mentioned above also testify to it. He could divine the spiritual inclinations and possibilities of the person he was going to initiate and prescribed for him the only course suitable for him. Before he gave initiation he would find out by meditation the *Ishta* (Chosen Deity) and *Mantra* (corresponding mystic formula) of the disciple, that is, the mode of practice and ideal appropriate to his spiritual nature. Thus he guided each of his disciples in his particular line of spiritual development. This is a task which only the *Gurus* of exceptional spiritual powers, those who come to earth to fulfil a divine mission, are capable to do. An ordinary *Guru* tries to lead his disciples along the path by which he himself has received spiritual illumination, but this cannot suit one and all. The Maharaj laid special stress on the choice of *Sādhana* by the *Guru* according to the disciple's spiritual characteristics. "Regarding spiritual practices," he remarked, "the same rule will not be applicable to all. We must know the peculiar tendencies of each individual before any spiritual instruction can be given for his guidance. If the instruction goes against the particular bent of one's nature, not only will it do one no good, but may even give rise to harmful consequences. It is, therefore, very essential that the *Guru* should study closely the individual tendencies and peculiarities of his disciples, and give instructions in such a form as will readily appeal to their temperaments. In this matter no individual can be told in the presence of others what particular

path he should follow. I have seen in the case of the Master how he would take each individual disciple aside and give him in private the special instructions necessary for him."

Yet he did not bind any of his disciples with hard and fast rules of conduct. Nor did he lead him by the hand at every step. But he gave him sufficient freedom to cultivate his innate spiritual consciousness and realise the truth for himself. He did not give him any direct order but recommended to him certain courses of action calculated to help his spiritual growth. "I give freedom to all," he said once. "I want everybody to advance along his own line. But when I find that he is not able to do so, I come to his help."

As a rule, he did not give initiation unless he was divinely inspired to do so and until he had a clear vision of the seeker's *Ishta* and *Mantra*. Once, at Travancore, a Railway employee, an Aiyanger by birth, prayed him for initiation. The Maharaj made no objection. But a day or two after, he said that he could not find out his *Ishta* and *Mantra*, so he asked him to wait. Then the Maharaj went to Cape Comorin to visit the temple of the Goddess Kanyākumārī. The said gentleman also joined the party. There at Cape Comorin his *Ishta* revealed Himself to the Maharaj, who then gladly initiated him.

There are also cases of persons receiving initiation from him in dream. Their number is of course very small. Some of them had not even seen him before. They had been attracted only by his name. The present writer had the occasion to know two of them directly. One of them was a devout young woman. After the dream-vision, she sought the earliest opportunity to go to the bodily presence of the Maharaj for confirmation. As she approached the Maharaj, who was then sitting with his *Gurubhāis*, she recognised him at the first sight, though he was not anyway identified to her. She then narrated the incident to him. The Maharaj asked her not to disclose the *Mantra*, which he found out

for himself and told her, perhaps to convince her of the reality of the dream. The other recipient was a young boy who forgot the *Mantra* as he woke up. He approached the Maharaj in person for initiation. When he received initiation long afterwards, he at once remembered the *Mantra* he had received in dream and found to his joy and surprise that the present *Mantra* was the same as that received in dream.

He helped the seekers of truth in diverse ways. As he stayed in different places during his long tours, many a weary traveller in the pathless forest of life came to him, mysteriously attracted as it were, for consolation, encouragement, guidance and benediction. It so happened in Madras that a *Vaishnava* devotee who earned his living by popular talks on God (*Hari-Kathā*) was greatly attracted by the Maharaj's spiri-

tual personality. He was long seeking a *Guru*. Though he had great veneration for the Maharaj he could not prepare his mind to receive initiation from him as he belonged to the Samkara Order of *Sannyāsins*, while he himself was an orthodox *Vaishnava* by birth and culture. One day he besought the Maharaj for his blessing so that he might soon find a *Guru* of the same religious faith as himself. The Maharaj was gracious to him. The man went away buoyed up with assurances he had received. Long after the Maharaj had left Madras, the same man one day came to the Madras Math bare-footed in the garb of a *Vaishnava* ascetic. It was known on enquiry that through the grace of the Maharaj he had met a *Siddha Vaishnava Guru* who was pleased to initiate him into his long-cherished line of *Sādhana* (spiritual discipline).

(To be concluded)

## THE LAST WORDS\*

By ROMAIN ROLLAND

I have no intention of concealing it : the great lesson taught by India is not without its own dangers, a fact that must be recognised. The idea of the Atman (the Sovereign Soul) is such strong wine that weak brains run the risk of being turned by it. And I am not sure that Vivekananda himself in his more juvenile moments was not intoxicated by its fumes, for example in the rodomontades of his adolescence, which Durgacharan has recorded, and to which Ramakrishna, the indulgent, listened, an ironic smile on his lips. Nag the pious, adopting the meek attitude Christianity has taught us, said on one occasion : "Everything happens according to the will of the Mother. She is the

Universal Will. She moves, but men imagine that it is they who move."

But the impetuous Naren replied :

"I do not agree with you, with your He or She. I am the Soul. In me is the universe. In me it is born, it floats and disappears."

Nag : "You have not power enough to change one single black hair into a white one, and yet you speak of the Universe. Without God's will not one blade of grass dies !"

Naren : "Without my will the Sun and the Moon could not move. At my will the Universe goes like a machine."<sup>1</sup>

Such pride is only a hair's breadth removed from the bragging of the Mata-

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<sup>1</sup> And Ramakrishna with a smile at his youthful pride, said to Nag : "Truly Naren can say that; for he is like a drawn sword." And the pious Nag bowed down before the young elect of the Mother. [See also *A Conversation with Swami Turiyananda*, page 480, in this issue.—Ed.]

more, and yet there is a world of difference—for he who spoke these words was Vivekananda, an intellectual hero who weighed the exact meaning of his audacious statements. Here is no foolish self-glorification or utterance of a delirious “Superman” taking his call before the curtain. This *Soul*, this *Atman*, this *Self* are not only those enclosed in the shell of my body with its transient and fleeting life. The Soul is the Self within thee, within you, within all, within the universe and before and beyond it. It can only be attained through detachment from the ego. The words: “All is the Soul. It is the only Reality,” do not mean that you, a man, are everything, but that it depends upon yourself whether you return your flask of stale water to the source of the snows whence flow all the streams of water. It is within you, you are the source, if you know how to renounce the flask. And so it is a lesson of supreme disinterestedness and not of pride.

It is none the less true that it contains an exhilarating lesson, and that in the impetus of ascension it lends to the soul, the latter is apt to forget the humble starting point, to remember nothing but the final achievement and to boast of its Godlike plumes. The air of great heights must be treated with caution. When all the Gods have been dethroned and nothing is left but the “Self,” beware of vertigo! It was this that made Vivekananda careful in his ascent not to hurry the whole mass of souls not yet inured to the precipices and the wind of the chasms. He made each one climb by small stages leaning upon the staff of his own religion or of the provisional spiritual *Credos* of his age and country. But too often his followers were impatient and sought to gain the summits without due rest and preparation. Hence it was hardly surprising that some fell and in their fall they were not only a danger to themselves, but to those who knew themselves to be inferior. The exaltations caused by the sudden realisation

of inner power may provoke social upheavals, whose effect and range of disturbance are difficult to calculate beforehand. It is therefore perhaps all to the good that Vivekananda and his monastic Order have consistently and resolutely kept aloof from all political action, although Indian Revolutionaries have more than once invoked his teaching and preached the Omnipotence of the Atman according to his words.

All great doctrine becomes fatally deformed. Each man twists it to his own profit and even the Church founded to defend it from usury and change is always tempted to stifle it and shut it up within its own proprietary walls. But considered in its unaltered greatness, it is a magnificent reservoir of moral force. Since everything is within ourselves and nothing outside, we assume full responsibility for our thoughts and deeds; there is no longer a God or a Destiny onto whom we can basely shift it. No more Jahveh, no more Eumenides, no more “Ghosts.” Each one of us has to reckon only with himself. Each one is the creator of his own destiny. It rests upon his shoulders alone. He is strong enough to base it. “Man has never lost his empire. The soul has never been bound. It is free by nature, it is without cause. It is beyond cause. Nothing can work upon it from without. . . . Believe that you are free and you will be! . . . .”

“The wind is blowing; those vessels whose sails are unfurled catch it and so they go forward on their way, but those whose sails are furled do not catch the wind. Is that the fault of the wind? . . . . Blame neither man, nor God, nor anyone in the world. . . . Blame yourselves, and try to do better. . . . All the strength and succour you need is within yourselves. Therefore make your own future.”

You call yourselves helpless, resourceless, abandoned, despoiled? . . . . Cowards! You have within yourselves the Force, the Joy and the Freedom, the whole of Infinite Existence. You have only to drink it.

From it you will not only imbibe torrents of energy, sufficient to water the world, but you will also imbibe the aspirations of a world athirst for those torrents and you will water it. For "He who is within you works through all hands, walks with the feet of all." He "is the mighty and the humble, the saint and the sinner, God and the earth-worm." He is everything, and "He is above all the miserable and the poor of all kinds and all races," "for it is the poor who have done all the gigantic work of the world."

If we will realise only a small part of this vast conception, "if one-millionth part of the men and women who live in this world simply sit down and for a few minutes say, 'You are all God, O ye men . . . and living beings, you are all manifestation of the one living Deity !' the whole world will be changed in half an hour. Instead of throwing tremendous bomb-shells of hatred into every corner, instead of projecting currents of jealousy and evil thought, in every country people will think that it is all He."

Is it necessary to repeat that this is no new thought? (And therein lies its force!) Vivekananda was not the first (such a belief would be childish) to conceive the Universe of the human Spirit and to desire its realisation. But he was the first to conceive it in all its fullness with no exception or limit. And it would have been impossible for him to do so, if he had not had before his eyes the extraordinary example of Ramakrishna.

It is no rare thing in these days to see occasional efforts by Congresses or Societies, when a few noble representatives of the great religions speak of union in the shape of a drawing together of all its different branches. Along parallel lines lay thinkers have tried to rediscover the thread, so many times broken, so many times renewed, running through blind evolution, connecting the separate attempts—successful and unsuccessful—of reason; and they have

again and again affirmed the unity of power and hope that exists in the Self of Humanity.

But neither attempt, isolated as it has been (perhaps that explains its failure), has yet arrived at the point of bridging the gap between the most religious of secular thought and the most secular of religious thought. Even the most generous have never succeeded in ridding themselves completely of the mental prejudice that convinces them of the superiority of their own spiritual family—however vast and magnanimous it may be—and makes them view the others with suspicion, because they also claim the right of primogeniture. Michelet's large heart would not have been able to maintain that it had "neither combatted nor criticised": even in his *Bible of Humanity*, he distinguished between two classes: the people of light and the people of darkness. And, naturally, he had a preference for his own races and his own small pond, the Mediterranean. The genial Ram Mohun Roy, when about 1828 he began to found his high "Universalism" with the intention of embracing Hindus, Mohammedans and Christians, erected the impenetrable barrier of theism—"God, the one and only without equal"—the enemy of polytheism. Such prejudice is still upheld by the Brâhmo Samaj and I find it again, veiled it is true, but none the less deep-rooted, in my most free-thinking friends of the Tagore circle, and in the most chivalrous champions of the reconciliation of religions—for example in the estimable *Federation of International Fellowships*, founded four or five years ago in Madras, which includes the most disinterested Anglo-Indian representatives of Protestant Christianity, and those of purified Hinduism, Jainism, and Theosophy: the popular religions of India are excluded from it and (characteristic omission) in the accounts of its meetings for several years the names of Vivekananda and Ramakrishna do not appear. Silence on that score! It might prove embarrassing. . . .

I can well imagine it! Our European devotees of reason would do just the same. Reason and the one God, and the God of the Bible and of the Koran would find it easier to come to an understanding than anyone of them would feel it to understand the multiple gods and to admit them into their temple. The tribe of Monos at a pinch will admit that Monos may be a man of God; but it will not tolerate the proliferation of the One, on the ground that anything of the kind is a scandal and a danger! I can discover traces of the same thing in the sorrowful revolt of my dearest Indian friends, who have been brought up like their glorious Roy on absolute Vedântism and highest Western reason. They believed, at last after long pain and conflict they had succeeded in integrating the latter in all the best Indian thought of the end of the nineteenth century—and then Ramakrishna and his trumpeter, Vivekananda, appeared on the scene calling alike the privileged and the common herd to worship and love all forms of the ideal, even to the millions of faces that they hoped they had thrust into oblivion! . . . In their eyes this was a mental retrogression.

But in mine it is a step in advance, a mighty Hanuman-leap over the strait separating the continents.<sup>2</sup> I have never seen anything fresher or more potent

<sup>2</sup> At the same time I do not want my Indian friends to interpret this vast comprehension of all forms of the religious spirit, from the lowest to the highest, as preference in favour of the lower and less developed. Therein lies the opposite danger of reaction, which is further encouraged by the belligerence provoked by the hostile or disdainful attitude of theists and rationalists. Man is always a creature of extremes. When the boat tips too far to one side, he flings himself on to the other. We want equilibrium. Let us recall the real meaning of religious synthesis, as sought by Vivekananda. Its spirit was definitely progressive:

"I disagree with all those who are giving their superstitions back to my people. Like the Egyptologist's interest in Egypt, it is easy to feel an interest in India that is purely selfish. One may desire to see again the India of one's books, one's studies, one's

in the religious spirit of all ages than this enfolding of all the Gods existing in humanity, of all the faces of Truth, of the entire body of human Dreams, in the heart and the brain, in the Paramahansa's great love and Vivekananda's strong arms. They have carried the great message of fraternity to all believers, to all visionaries, to all who have neither belief nor vision, but who seek for them in all sincerity, to all men of goodwill, rationalists and religious men, to those who believe in great Books or in images, to those with the simple trust of the charcoal-burner, to agnostics and inspired persons, to intellectuals and illiterates. And not merely the fraternity of the first-born, whose right as the eldest dispossesses and subjects his younger brethren, but equality of rights and of privileges.

I have said above that even the word "tolerance," which is the most magnificent generosity in the eyes of the West (such an old, miserly peasant), wounded the sense of justice and the proud delicacy of Vivekananda; for it seemed to him an insulting and protective concession, such as a superior might make to weaker brethren whom he had the right to censure. He wished people to "accept" on the basis of equality and not to "tolerate." Whatever shape the vase might be that contained the water, the water was always the same, the

dreams. My hope is to see again the strong points of that India, reinforced by the strong points of this age, only in a natural way. The new state of things must be a growth from within." (Interviews with Sister Nivedita during the last journey from India to Europe, 1899.)

There is here no thought of return to the past. And if some blind and exaggerated followers of the Master have been self-deceived on the subject, the authorised representatives of the Ramakrishna Mission, who are the real heirs of Vivekananda's spirit, contrive to steer a course between the two reefs of orthodox reaction, which tries to galvanise the skeletons of ideas into fresh life, and rationalist pseudo-progress which is only a form of imperialistic colonisation by races of different mentality. Real progress is like the sap rising from the bottom of the roots throughout the whole tree.

same God. One drop is as holy as the ocean. In fact this declaration of equality between the humblest and highest carries all the more weight because it comes from the highest—from an intellectual aristocrat, who believed that the peak he had scaled, the Advaitic faith, was the summit of all the mountains in the world. He could speak as one having authority, for, like his Master Ramakrishna, he had traversed all the stages of the way. But, while Ramakrishna by his own powers had climbed all the steps from the bottom to the top, Vivekananda with Ramakrishna's help learnt how to come down them again from the top to the bottom and to know them and to recognise them all as the eyes of the One, who is reflected in their pupils like a rainbow.

But you must not suppose that this immense diversity spells anarchy and confusion. If you have fully digested Vivekananda's teaching on the Yogas, you will have been impressed on all sides by the order of the superimposed designs, the beautiful perspective, the hierarchy—not in the sense of the relation between a master and his subjects, but of the architecture of stone masses or of music rising tier on tier : the great concord that steals from the keyboard under the hand of the Master organist. Each note has its own part in the harmony. No series of notes must be suppressed, and polyphony reduced to unison with the excuse that your own part is the most beautiful ! Play your own part, perfectly and in time, but follow with your ear the concert of the other instruments united to your own ! The player who is so weak that instead of reading his own part, he doubles that of his neighbour, wrongs himself, the work and the orchestra. What should we say of a double-bass if he insisted on playing the part of the first violin ? Or of the instrument that announced : "Silence the rest ! Those who have learnt my part, follow me !" —A symphony is not a class of babies being taught in a primary school to spell out a word all on the same tone !

And this teaching condemns all spirit of propaganda, whether clerical or lay, that wishes to mould other brains on its own model (the model of its own God, or of its own non-God, who is merely God in disguise). It is a theory which upsets all our preconceived and deep-seated ideas, all our age-long heritage. We can always find a good reason, Churchmen or Sorbonnes alike, for serving those who do not invite us to do so, by uprooting the tares (together with the grain) from the patch of ground that provides them with food ! Is it not the most sacred duty of man to root out the tares and briars of error from his own heart and from that of his neighbour—especially from that of his neighbour ? And error surely is nothing but that which is not truth to us ? Very few men are great enough to rise above this naively ego-centric philanthropy. I have hardly met a single one among my masters and companions of the rationalist and scientific secular army—however virile, strong and generous they appeared to be : for with their hands full of the harvest they had gleaned, their one idea was to shower it willy-nilly on humanity. . . . "Take, eat, either voluntarily or forcibly ! What is good for me must be good for you. And if you perish by following my prescription, it will be your fault and not the fault of the prescription, as in the case of Molière's doctors. The Faculty is always right." And the opposite camp of the Churches is still worse, for there it is a question of saving souls for eternity. Every kind of holy violence is legitimate for a man's real good.

That is why I was glad to hear Gandhi's voice quite recently—in spite of the fact that his temperament is the antithesis of Ramakrishna's or Vivekananda's—remind his brethren of the International Fellowships, whose pious zeal disposed them to evangelise, of the great universal principle of religious "Acceptance," the same preached by Vivekananda. "*After long study and experience,*" he said, "*I have come to these conclusions, that*

1. *All religions*—(and by that, I, the Author, personally understand those of reason as well as of faith)—*are true*;

2. *All religions have some error in them*;

3. *All religions are almost as dear to me as my own Hinduism.* My veneration for other faiths is the same as for my own faith. In consequence the thought of conversion is impossible. The object of the Fellowships ought to be to help a Hindu to be a better Hindu, a Musulman to become a better Musulman, a Christian to become a better Christian. An attitude of protective tolerance is opposed to the spirit of the International Fellowships. If in my innermost heart I have the suspicion that my religion is the truest, and that other religions are less true, then, although I may have a certain kind of fellowship with the others, it is an extremely different kind from that required in the International Fellowships. Our attitude towards the others ought to be absolutely frank and sincere. Our prayer for others ought never to be : 'God! give them the light thou hast given to me!' But : 'Give them all the light and truth they need for their highest development!'"

And when the inferiority of animist and polytheistic superstitions, which seemed to the aristocracy of the great theistic religions to be the lowest step on the human ladder, was urged against him, Gandhi replied softly :

"In what concerns them I ought to be humble and beware lest arrogance should sometimes speak through the humblest language. It takes a man all his time to become a good Hindu, a good Christian, or a good Musulman. It takes me all my time to be a good Hindu, and I have none left over for evangelising the animist; I cannot really believe that he is my inferior."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> To a colleague who asked him : "Can I not hope to give my religious experience of God to my friend?" Gandhi replied : "Can an ant desire his own knowledge and experience to be given to an elephant? And vice versa? . . . Pray rather that God

At bottom Gandhi not only condemns all religious propaganda either open or covert, but all conversion, even voluntary, from one faith to another, is displeasing to him : "If some persons think that they ought to change their religious 'etiquette,' I cannot deny that they are free to do so, but I am sorry to see it."

Nothing more contrary to our Western way of both religious and secular thought can be imagined. At the same time there is nothing from which the West and the rest of the modern world can derive more useful teaching. At this stage of human evolution, wherein both blind and conscious forces are driving all natures to draw together for "co-operation or death", it is absolutely essential that the human consciousness should be impregnated with it, until this indispensable principle becomes an axiom : that every faith has an equal right to live, and that there is an equal duty incumbent upon every man to respect that which his neighbour respects. In my opinion Gandhi, when he stated it so frankly, showed himself to be the heir of Ramakrishna.

There is no single one of us who cannot take this lesson to heart. The writer of these lines he has vaguely aspired to this wide comprehension all through his life—feels only too deeply at this moment how many are his shortcomings

may, give your friend the fullest light and knowledge—not necessarily the same that He has given to you."

Another asked : "Can we not share our experience?"

Gandhi replied : "Our spiritual experiences are necessarily shared (or communicated) whether we suspect it or not—but by our lives (by our example), not by our words which are a very faulty medium. Spiritual experiences are deeper than thought itself. . . (From the one fact that we live) our spiritual experience will overflow. But where there is a consciousness of sharing (the will to work spiritually), there is selfishness. If you Christians wish another to share your Christian experience, you will raise an intellectual barrier. Pray simply that your friends may become better men, whatever their religion."

in spite of his aspirations; and he is grateful for Gandhi's great lesson, the same lesson that was preached by Vivekananda, and still more by Ramakrishna, to help him to achieve it.

But this difference will always remain between the thought of Gandhi and that of Vivekananda, that the latter, being a great intellectual which Gandhi is not in the slightest degree, could not detach himself as Gandhi has done from systems of thought. While both recognised the validity of all religions, Vivekananda made this recognition an article of doctrine and a subject of instruction. And that was one of the reasons for the existence of the Order he founded. He meant in all sincerity to abstain from any kind of spiritual domination whatsoever. But the sun cannot moderate his rays. His burning thought was operative from the very fact that it existed. And although Vivekananda's Advaitism might revolt from the annexationist propaganda of faith, it was sufficient for him to appear as a great flaming fire for other wandering souls to gather round it. It is not given to all to renounce command. Even when they speak to themselves the Vivekanandas speak to humanity. They cannot whisper if they would, and he did not attempt to do so. A great voice is made to fill the sky. The whole earth is its sounding-box. That is why, unlike Gandhi whose natural ideal is in proportion to his nature, free, equitable, average, and measured, tending in the realm of faith as in politics to a Federation of men of goodwill,—Vivekananda appeared in spite of himself as an emperor, whose aim was to discipline the independent but co-ordinate kingdoms of the spirit under the sceptre of the One. And the work which he founded has proceeded according to this plan.

His dream was to make the great monastery, the mother house of Belur, a human "Temple of Knowledge". And since with him "to know" and "to do" were synonymous, the ministry of Knowledge was sub-divided into three

departments: (1) Charity (Anna-dāna, that is the gift of food and other physical necessities); (2) Learning (Vidyā-dāna that is, intellectual knowledge); (3) Meditation (Jnāna-dāna, that is spiritual knowledge)—the synthesis of all three teachings being indispensable to the constitution of a man. There was to be gradual purification, necessary progression—starting from the imperious necessities of the body of humanity which needs nourishment and succour—up to the supreme conquest of the detached spirit absorbed in Unity.

For a Vivekananda the light is not to be hidden under a bushel; hence every kind of means for self-development should be at everybody's door. No man ought to keep anything for himself alone.

"Of what consequence is it to the world if you or I attain to Mukti? We have to take the whole universe with us to Mukti. . . . Unparalleled Bliss! The Self realised in all living beings and in every atom of the universe!"

The first statutes drawn up by him in May 1897 for the foundation of the Ramakrishna Mission established expressly that "The aim of the Association is to preach those truths, which Sri Ramakrishna has, for the good of humanity, given out and demonstrated by practical application in his own life, and to keep those truths, being made practical in the lives of others for their temporal, mental and spiritual advancement."

Hence the spirit of propaganda was established in the doctrine whose essence is the "the establishment of fellowship among the followers of different religions, knowing them all to be so many forms only of one undying Eternal Religion."

It is so difficult to extirpate from the human spirit the need to affirm to others that its own truth and its own good must also be their truth and their good!—And it may be asked whether, if it were extirpated, it would still be "human". Gandhi's spiritual detachment is almost disincarnate, as was the



universal attachment of Ramakrishna the lover, to all minds, although he arrived at it by the reverse process. Vivekananda never achieved it. He remained flesh and bones. Even from his appearance it was possible to infer that although absolute detachment bathed the heights of his mind, the rest of his body remained immersed in life and action. His whole edifice bears this double impress: the basement is a nursery of apostles of truth and social service, who mix in the life of the people and the movement of the times. But the summit is the *Ara Maxima*, the lantern of the dome, the spire of the cathedral, the Ashrama of all Ashramas, the Advaita built on the Himalayas, where the two hemispheres, the West and the East, meet at the confluence of all mankind in absolute Unity.

The architect had accomplished his work. Brief though his life, he saw before he died, as he said, his "machine in strong working order;" he had inserted in the massive block of India "a lever for the good of humanity which no power can drive back."

Together with our Indian brethren it is our task to bear upon it. And if we cannot flatter ourselves that the crushing mass of human inertia,—the first and last cause of crime and sin—will be raised for centuries to come, what matters a century! We shake it nevertheless. . . "E pur si muove. . ." And new gangs will always arise to replace the worn-out gangs. The work begun by the two Indian Masters, will be carried on resolutely by other workmen of the spirit in other parts of the world. In whatever tunnel a man may be digging, he is never out of sound of the sap being dug on the other side of the mountain.

My European companions, I have made you listen through the wall to the blows of the coming one, Asia. Go to meet her. She is working for us. We are working for her. Europe and Asia are the two halves of the Soul, Man is *not* yet. He *will be*. God is resting and has left to us his most beautiful creation—that of the Seventh Day: to free the sleeping forces of the enslaved Spirit, to reawaken God in man, to re-create the Being itself.

## ASHTAVAKRA SAMHITA

By SWAMI NITYASWARUPANANDA

शून्या दृष्टिर्वा चेष्टा विकलानीन्द्रियाणि च ।

न स्पृहा न विरक्तिर्वा क्षीणसंसारसागरे ॥ ६ ॥

शून्यसंसारसागरे In one for whom the ocean of the world has dried up स्पृहा attachment न not विरक्तिः non-attachment वा or न not ( चक्षि is तस्य his ) दृष्टिः look यस्या vacant चेष्टा action इष्टा to no purpose इन्द्रियाणि senses विकलानि deranged ( च and ).

9. There is no attachment or non-attachment in one for whom the ocean<sup>1</sup> of the world has dried<sup>2</sup> up. His look is vacant,<sup>3</sup> action purposeless<sup>4</sup> and the senses deranged.<sup>5</sup>

[<sup>1</sup> *Ocean etc.*—The world (life of birth and rebirth) is likened unto an ocean. When one falls in an ocean, he is buffeted and carried hither and thither by its waves and finds it hard to reach the shore and there is untold suffering. In the *Samsāra*, *Karmas* and desires move us hither and thither, we suffer greatly and cannot reach the certitude of Self-knowledge.

<sup>2</sup> *Dried etc.*—When one is free from ignorance and its resultant *Karmas* and desires. One then realises his Self.

\* *Vacant*—Because he has no motive whatsoever inside.

\* *Purposeless*—Because his actions have no end in view.

\* *Deranged*—Because his senses no longer receive any impression from the objects presented to them,—they do not act like the senses of an ordinary man.]

न जागर्त्ति न निद्राति नोन्मीलति न मीलति ।

अहो परदशा कापि वर्तते मुक्तचेतसः ॥ १० ॥

( ज्ञानी The wise one ) न not जागर्त्ति keeps awake न not निद्राति sleeps न not उन्मीलति opens eyes न not मीलति closes eyes अहो Oh मुक्तचेतसः of a liberated soul क्व कपि anywhere परदशा supreme condition वर्तते is.

10. The wise one neither<sup>1</sup> keeps awake nor sleeps, neither opens nor closes his eyes. Oh, the liberated soul anywhere<sup>2</sup> enjoys the supreme condition.

[<sup>1</sup> *Neither etc.*—A liberated soul may not be called awake as he does not seek the objects of the world and perceive them as we do. He is dead to the relative world. He may not also be called sleeping as he is ever conscious of the Self pervading the universe.

<sup>2</sup> *Anywhere*—under all conditions.]

सर्वत्र दृश्यते स्वस्थः सर्वत्र विमलाशयः ।

समस्तवासनामुक्तो मुक्तः सर्वत्र राजते ॥ ११ ॥

मुक्तः The liberated person सर्वत्र everywhere स्वस्थः abiding in Self सर्वत्र everywhere विमलाशयः pure in heart ( च and ) दृश्यते is seen सर्वत्र everywhere समस्तवासना-मुक्तः freed from all desires ( सन् being ) राजते lives ( च and ).

11. The liberated person is found everywhere<sup>1</sup> abiding in Self and pure<sup>2</sup> in heart, and he lives everywhere<sup>3</sup> freed from all desires.

[<sup>1</sup> *Everywhere*—under all circumstances, good and evil.

<sup>2</sup> *Pure etc.*—not attached to the worldly objects.

<sup>3</sup> *Everywhere*—Under no conditions is he attracted by the objects of enjoyment.]

पश्यन् शृण्वन् स्पृशन् जिघ्रन्श्च गृह्णन् वदन् व्रजन् ।

ईदितानीहितैर्मुक्तो मुक्त एव महाशयः ॥ १२ ॥

पश्यन् Seeing शृण्वन् hearing स्पृशन् touching जिघ्रन् smelling चक्षन् eating गृह्णन् taking वदन् speaking व्रजन् walking ईदितानीहितैः from efforts and non-efforts मुक्तः free महाशयः man of great soul मुक्तः free एव indeed.

12. Seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, taking, speaking and walking, the great-souled one, free from all efforts and non-efforts, is verily emancipated.

[True knowledge does not necessarily consist in the cessation of action but in the absence of attachment. The knower of the Self, therefore, even if he acts, does not in reality act. He is ever free, though his behaviour may seem the same as that of others. He is above action and inaction.]

न निन्दति न च स्तौति न हृष्यति न क्रुध्यति ।

न ददाति न गृह्णाति मुक्तः सर्वत्र नीरसः ॥ १३ ॥

मुक्तः The liberated one न not निन्दति slanders न not स्तौति praises न not हृष्यति rejoices न not क्रुध्यति is angry न not ददाति gives न not गृह्णाति takes च and ( सः he ) सर्वत्र everywhere नीरसः free from attachment.

13. The liberated one neither slanders nor praises, neither rejoices nor is angry, neither gives nor takes. He is everywhere free<sup>1</sup> from attachment.

[<sup>1</sup> Free etc.—He has no special liking for anything. This idea of sameness under all conditions is detailed in the succeeding verses.]

सानुरागां स्त्रियं दृष्ट्वा मृत्युं वा समुपस्थितम् ।

अविह्वलमनाः स्वस्थो मुक्त एव महाशयः ॥ १४ ॥

सानुरागां Loving स्त्रियं woman मृत्युं death समुपस्थितं near at hand वा or दृष्ट्वा seeing महाशयः the great-souled one अविह्वलमनाः unperturbed in the mind स्वस्थः self-poised ( च and तिष्ठति remains सः he ) मुक्तः emancipated एव indeed.

14. The great-souled one is not perturbed and remains self-poised both<sup>1</sup> at the sight of a woman full of love and of approaching death. He is indeed<sup>2</sup> liberated.

[<sup>1</sup> Both etc.—Two opposite cases are cited,—most pleasant and most terrible. The liberated one remains the same under both these conditions.

<sup>2</sup> Indeed etc.—Such equanimity is a true sign of liberation.]

सुखे दुःखे नरे नार्यां सम्पत्सु च विपत्सु च ।

विशेषो नैव धीरस्य सर्वत्र समदर्शिनः ॥ १५ ॥

सर्वत्र Everywhere समदर्शिनः of one seeing the same धीरस्य of the steady one सुखे in happiness दुःखे in misery नरे in man नार्यां in woman सम्पत्सु in prosperity च (expletive) विपत्सु in adversity च and विशेषः speciality न not एव verily ( भवति is ).

15. The sage who sees the same everywhere, makes<sup>1</sup> no difference between happiness and misery, man and woman, and prosperity and adversity.

[<sup>1</sup> Makes etc.—He is not affected by the 'pairs of opposites.']

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

The present number opens with *An Unpublished Letter of Swami Vivekananda*. It reminds us of Sister Nivedita's *Cradle Tales of Hinduism* which evidently she was planning about that time . . . The next article, *Four Paths of Yoga*, is also by SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

It has not been hitherto published in *Prabuddha Bharata* or included in *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*. It was written by the Swami with his own hand during his first visit in America to answer questions put by a Western disciple. . . . We have to state, as last month, that we have included in our article, *Some Fundamentals of Hindu-*

ism—II, a few passages from some of our previous writings. . . . We are glad to be able to publish *A Conversation with Swami Turiyananda* by A DEVOTEE, which we are sure will be found interesting and illuminating. . . . DR. MAHENDRANATH SIRCAR, M.A., PH.D., contributes *The Delight Supernal* to this number. . . . NICHOLAS ROERICH whose *Vignettes of India* we reproduce from *The Message of the East* (Boston), is a well-known Russian artist, writer and thinker, and one of the dominant figures in the art-world to-day. He is also a great traveller and has visited India and trans-Himalayan regions. The present article is extracted from his book, *Altai-Himalaya*. . . . Last July and August, we published the first article by SHIV CHANDRA DATTA, M.A., B.L., F.R.ECON. S. on the economic views of Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar. In *Vocational Education in Germany and France*, Mr. Datta records further views of Prof. Sarkar. . . . *The Last Words* by ROMAIN ROLLAND should not be considered his last contribution on Swami Vivekananda and his teaching to *Prabuddha Bharata*. Others will follow. We would like to mention one point in connection with the present article : it is not correct, we think, to consider Sri Ramakrishna's attitude to religious preaching as 'disincarnate' and passive. Sri Ramakrishna definitely believed in the preaching of religion by qualified persons, and he repeatedly asked his disciples, especially his chief disciple, to do Mother's work which was mainly the imparting of spiritual instruction, and we know how well they have done and are doing it. There are numerous passages in the recorded teachings and conversations of the Master to corroborate our statement. We are bound to infer, therefore, that in this, Mahatma Gandhi's attitude, as mentioned by M. Rolland in his article, is quite different from Sri Ramakrishna's. There is no conflict between the acceptance of the truth of all religions and religious preaching, as we showed in our article, April, 1929.

## WALT WHITMAN AND INDIAN INFLUENCE

Was Walt Whitman, the great poet of *Leaves of Grass*, anyway influenced by Hindu thought? Was he aware of it? We discussed the questions partly in one of our *Notes* last June. A further discussion may not be unprofitable.

M. Rolland in his article, *America at the Time of Vivekananda's First Visit*, shows how Emerson was profoundly influenced by Indian thought and says that "he (Whitman) heard some lectures or conferences of Emerson's and they may have intellectualised his intuition so that it came to fruition in ideas. . . ." In 1887, Whitman denied that he had read Emerson before 1855. But in 1856 he had written to Emerson that the latter had been the Columbus of the "New Continent" of the soul and Whitman its inspired explorer : "It is you who have discovered these shores. . . ." Whitman was personally acquainted with Emerson, though the acquaintance seems to have been formed after the publication of *Leaves of Grass*. It is interesting to note that when Whitman met Emerson at Concord in 1860, Emerson said to him "all that could be said against that part (and a main part) in the construction of my poems, 'Children of Adam' [in which Whitman glorifies sex and body—"And if the body were not the soul, what is the soul?"]". Emerson asked Whitman to answer his charges. Whitman could not : "Only that while I can't answer them at all, I feel more settled than ever to adhere to my own theory, and exemplify it." This is only by the way. What concerns us is a passage in Whitman's *Collect* ("Notes Left Over"). Writing of Emerson's books, he says : "The reminiscence that years ago I began like most youngsters to have a touch (though it came late, and was only on the surface) of Emerson-on-the-brain—that I read his writings reverently, and address'd him in print as 'Master' and for a month or so thought of him as such—I retain not

only with composure, but positive satisfaction." What was the date of this experience? Was it before his writing of *Leaves of Grass* or after? We have no positive proof here that it was before. But it would not be wrong to infer from internal evidence that it was so. If we are correct in our conclusion, then Whitman was really influenced by Indian thought through Emerson.

But we have clearer proof that Whitman was acquainted with Indian thought. It lies in his own writings. M. Rolland says: "It is improbable that it was any reading of Indian thought that touched him. When Thoreau, in November, 1856, came to tell him that his *Leaves of Grass* recalled to his mind the great Oriental poems and to ask if he knew them, Whitman replied with a categorical 'No!' and there is no reason to doubt his word." But we have reasons to hold that he had read Indian poems. In his *November Boughs* ("Our Eminent Visitors") he talks of "the interminable Hindu epics," and ("The Bible as Poetry") he writes of the "finest blending of individuality with universality . . . typified in the songs of those old Asiatic lands," and thus refers to the *Mahābhārata* and quotes from it: "The episode, for instance, toward the close of the 'Mahabharata'—the journey of the wife Savitri with the god of death, Yama,

'One terrible to see—blood-red his garb,

His body huge and dark, bloodshot his eyes,

Which flamed like suns beneath his turban cloth,

Arm'd was he with a noose,'

who carries off the soul of the dead husband, the wife tenaciously following and—by the resistless charm of perfect poetic recitation!—eventually redeeming her captive mate." This is rather good knowledge of Indian poems.

It may be said that the poet read them later in his life. But we have his own admission to the contrary. In his *A Backward Glance o'er Travel'd*

*Roads*, in which he innumbrates the influences that went to the making of his mind before he wrote his *Leaves*, he writes: "Later, at intervals, summers and falls, I used to go off, sometimes for a week at a stretch, down in the country, or to Long Island's sea-shores—there in the presence of outdoor influences, I went over thoroughly the Old and New Testaments, and absorb'd (probably to better advantage for me than in any library or indoor room—it makes such difference *where* you read,) Shakespeare, Ossian, the best translated versions I could get of Homer, Eschylus, Sophocles, the old German Nibelungen, the ancient Hindoo poems, and one or two other masterpieces, Dante's among them." This is certainly conclusive.

We hold, therefore, that Whitman was influenced by Hindu thought both directly and indirectly (and let us note what he says of the Asiatic poems—"the finest blending of individuality with universality"—certainly a central motif of Whitman's thought). But this is not to say that Hindu thought was the main inspirer of his writings.

### TANTRA AND VEDANTA

What are the exact relations between the philosophy of *Tantra* and the *Advaita Vedānta* of Sankara? Do they propound the same view of reality? This question has been raised in our mind by a book which reached us some-time back—*Mahāmâyā* by Sir John Woodroffe and P. Mukhopadhyaya (published by Ganesh & Co., Madras, Price Rs. 5/-). Sir John's name is well-known to our readers. He has done a great service to India by expounding the *Tāntrik* philosophy. His various books on *Tantra* have received well-deserved appreciation in various parts of the world. In the present work the authors have fully developed the fundamental philosophical concepts of the *Tantra*, including the metaphysics, psychology and cosmology of the system. They have added to the interest of the book by tracing comparisons from the philo-

sophy and science of the West. There are many chapters which are really illuminating. The authors have tried their best to throw philosophical light upon the method of worship pursued in the *Tantra* and upon the mysterious *Kundalini*, the centre of psychic dynamism. The book can be well regarded as the *Tāntrik* digest. The language, however, is unfortunately terse and too much matter has been condensed within too short a space. And we do not find in this book that healthy spirit of criticism which can say 'No' when the *Tantra* says 'Yes'. The authors have identified themselves with the Kashmir School of the *Tantra*, but they have not explained the difficulties that suggest themselves to the critical student of that school.

The Kashmir School represents the ultimate reality as statico-dynamic and is different from *Sāṅkara Vedānta* which represents the ultimate reality as static, and from Heraclitus and Bergson who identify reality with dynamism and duration. But they agree in one fundamental fact—that the reality is alogical. The *Tantra* has not left out of consideration any aspect of life and experience. It can be designated as the Indian philosophy of Activism. But it is different from the Activism of Heraclitus and Bergson.

If the highest reality be statico-dynamic, as some *Tantras* maintain, we can have the periodical sleep and awakening of the universe in the bosom of the absolute reality, and since there can be no cessation of this process of evolution and involution, we are left without any promise of emancipation. The individual ego through the help of *Mahāmāyā* can tear off the veil of *Māyā*, the individual ignorance, and break the centralisation of consciousness in the individual form; but this can give us the fruition of the *Vedāntic* form of *Ahamgraha Upāsana*, but not the absolute emancipation of the *Vedānta*.

Since the Kashmir School accepts the ultimate reality to be statico-dynamic,

the absolute emancipation cannot be possible, for though the reference-centres can be for the moment broken, they would reappear under the stress of the perpetual dynamism. This school no doubt refers to a form of *Nirvāṇik* calm in the passing off of the cosmic process in the ultimate background, but this can only be a temporary set-back, for the energising is continuous.

The Kashmir School recognises the alogical indeterminate character of the ultimate reality but it also recognises a constant tendency in it to pass into determinate forms, and this tendency has the initial expression in the formation of the cosmic 'I'-consciousness. It should be noted here that the *Tantra* is different from the *Vedānta* in maintaining the reality of the determinate formation out of the indeterminate background. It is not illusory as the *Vedāntists* maintain. For the '*Abhāsa-vāda*' of the *Tantra* is really distinguished from the *Māyā-vāda* of the *Vedānta* in accepting the reality of the determinate formations. The determinate is distinguished from the indeterminate in developing a system of relations. But these relations are surely not unreal. It is, therefore, difficult to understand how these determinations can pass away into the indeterminate background and can again emerge out of it. In fact the determinate is the indeterminate expressed in relations. It is nothing different from it. It is only a definite phase of the ultimate reality. In view of this we cannot imagine how the determinate can be wholly an occasional and transitory phase in the becoming.

The indeterminate might be completely devoid of all relations or it may potentially contain the relations that subsequently evolve out of it. The complete negation of relations and the absolute sameness of reality this school cannot accept. For that would be inconsistent with the reality of the order of determinations. Necessarily the ultimate reality must be potentially determinate. Otherwise the continuity of the order of relations with the ultimate

reality cannot maintain itself. Hence the ultimate reality cannot be characterised alogical and indeterminate. The Absolute of the Kashmir School is like Prof. Whitehead's Primordial Absolute in which concepts are not as yet developed. But it cannot be devoid of logical relations. To conceive a logical system out of an alogical background seems to be a hopeless task. To define the Absolute as non-relational and at the same time affirm that it is a system of internal harmony embrative of all forms of relations, can be hardly consistent. Bradley tried such a synthesis, but he hopelessly failed. The Kashmir School also has not fared better.

This logical inaccuracy must lead to a practical difficulty in the life of realisation. The *Tantra* points to the indeterminate existence as the most desirable as it gives the sense of freedom and relief from the individualistic expression. But this freedom cannot be complete inasmuch as the individual centres of experience are not illusory. Even if the individual stirring be hushed off into silence by the cosmic centripetal tendency, still it cannot remain long in that stage, as by the necessity of the

case the centrifugal tendency soon asserts itself and a new order of cosmic becoming sets in.

It is evidently clear that with the philosophic background of statico-dynamic reality emancipation or freedom is logically impossible. If the *Tantra* commits itself to this form of reality, it would suffer from a shortcoming inasmuch as it would not be able to truly hold out the promise of emancipation to the ardent soul.

Fortunately, however, all *Tantras* do not consider the highest reality as statico-dynamic. The Bengal School specially looks upon it as the Absolute in the same sense as the *Advaita Vedānta* of Sankara and has thus formed a synthesis of *Tantra* and *Vedānta*. *Tantra* has its specialities. But in its last conclusion it is one with the *Sāṅkara Vedānta*. There is no doubt that the *Tāntrik* discipline also leads one to complete emancipation. That would not have been possible if the *Tāntrik* realisation of the ultimate reality had been statico-dynamic. The Bengal School is truer to the *Tāntrik* realisations than the Kashmir School. We wish the authors had not forgotten to notice this.

## REVIEW

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF THE BHAGAVAD GITA. By Prakash Chandra Nyayabagish, B.A. Gurudas Chatterji and Sons, Calcutta. 124 pp. Price Re. 1.

It is a treatise that brings out the essential features of the *Gītā* on rational lines. The author has confined himself to the rational interpretation of such doctrines as concern our practical life. His words are simple and clear, orderly and convincing. The author's method of treatment is as rational as his scope. He goes straight to a problem, analyses the situation, discusses the problem and arrives at a conclusion without bias, and then he supports his statement by apt quotations from scriptures like the *Upanishads*, *Bhāgavatam*, and *Gītā*.

The central idea of the book is to discuss and state ways and means that will go to free life from its miseries, from the toils and

turmoils in which life labours. Metaphysical questions have no doubt cropped up in course of discussion, but they have been made subordinate to the practical demand of life which consists in building a godly nature.

The author lays great stress on *Samadarshana* as an important spiritual exercise common to all the methods of all the great religions of the world. In order to hasten to the goal one must practise *Samadarshana* along with *Jñāna*, *Bhakti* or *Karma*.

The metaphysical position of the author is *Dvaitādvaita-vāda*. It is true theism has assumed a disproportionate shape in the *Gītā*, but it represents the cultural unity of the race in the most comprehensive manner. The *Gītā* contains all the standpoints from which truth has been viewed. It not only presents all the possible methods of realisation, but lays down different stages in the

spiritual unfolding in different persons. *Dvaita*, *Dvaitādvaita* and *Advaita* have all their proper place and function in the *Gitā* which is for all times and all persons. A logical mind may find it difficult to conceive how A can be both B and Not-B. But everything is not within the range of logic. The ultimate reality cannot be gauged by empirical measures. It can be felt by intuition which, though different from reason, is not opposed to it. The ultimate reality is, in fact, the meeting ground of all contradictions. Even the author feels this agnostic pressure of mysticism when he says: "It is not possible for man to know the exact relation between Jiva and Brahma."

A student of modern psychology will find a little confusion in following such expressions as "... then control the activity of the mind by effacing determination to do or not to do anything, and of the intellect by giving up reasoning." Here the author uses intellect for *Buddhi*, and attributes the function of determination only to mind and that of reasoning to *Buddhi* which is a *Sāmkhya* evolute of *Prakṛiti* preceding mind. These terms, however, do not stand in the way of understanding.

It is an excellent treatise on the *Gitā* and is sure to help aspirants in crystallising their thoughts and leading a godly life.

**CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY.** By Nirmal Kumar Bose, M.Sc. *Arya Sahitya Bhavan, Calcutta.* 148 pp. Price Re. 1/4/-.

This is an elementary book on the science of human culture. It investigates into the nature of culture and the laws of the cultural evolution of man in relation to his environment. No scientific study of human life can be adequate, which does not take into account the geographical and the historical conditions. But human nature is after all the most important factor in cultural development. We are glad to observe that the author has attached due importance to this creative agent. Culture can be defined, in the words of the author, "as the crystallised phase of man's life-activities."

The book does not deal with the different aspects of culture, such as religion, language, social organization, etc., separately, but treats of culture as a whole under the following heads: (1) What is culture, (2) the general nature of culture, (3) the structure of a cultural trait, (4) the distribution of a trait, and (5) changes due to contact. The growth of culture, its distribution, decay and

modification have been explained in the light of certain social and religious institutions of India. It is to be noted that the author's view of the defensive social policy of India is not always correct. As for example, the author remarks: "Traits like cow-worship are proofs of an absence of spiritual energy among the upholders of Hindu culture, a deficiency which has been brought about mainly through economic distress following foreign domination." It should be remembered that cow-worship prevailed in India long before the Mahomedan rule.

The author lays much stress on the economic value of culture. It is true that cultural traits are adopted or rejected by people often from economic considerations. But the superiority of a culture does not rest so much on its economic worth as on the spiritual ideal and the aesthetic sense it embodies. To live in happiness and comfort may be a supreme object of life from the biological standpoint. But man also seeks truth and goodness for their own sake.

Finally, the author shows how the cultural progress of a country suffers from pride and prejudice. India has been the meeting ground of different cultures in modern times. A cultural readjustment is essential at this stage of her national development. But this cannot be effected without proper evaluation of different cultures free from narrowness and ignorance.

The book is nicely printed and got up.

**GANDHIJI'S SATYAGRAHA OR NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE.** By Richard B. Gregg. S. Ganesan, Triplicane, Madras. 498 pp. Price Re. 1/8/-.

The promotion of world-peace has engaged many thinking minds since the last great War. The horrors of scientific warfare have made people averse to violence and conflict. But how to abolish war? Is not man a fighting animal by very nature? Then again, though war is an evil, it is not without truths and virtues. Is it not possible to secure the benefits of war and avoid its dangers at the same time? The author propounds the principle of Non-violent Resistance as a practical solution of this problem. The use of this method by Mahatma Gandhi and his faith in it drew the author to India, where he stayed four years watching the process in actual practice and trying to understand its full significance. The scope of Non-violent Resistance, as explained by the author, is not limited to the



case of India. It is a principle of universal application. Though the author has derived his inspiration from the Mahatmaji, the interpretation is his own.

The author begins by citing some notable instances of the successful use of Non-violent Resistance in modern times. It is not a new invention. It has been adopted in different countries in different times in individual and collective lives with wonderful success. The author has tried to be thorough in his treatment of the subject. He has dwelt at length on its various aspects, such as, economic, political, philosophical, spiritual and hygienic, and answered all possible doubts as to the feasibility of the method.

That Non-violent Resistance is an effective means to fight against wrongs nobody will perhaps deny. But its universal application depends on a wholesale change of man's habits and outlook on life. However, the examples set by a few will no doubt inspire many. And it is not too much to expect that with the passing of days the method will be of wider and wider application.

**THE INNER GOVERNMENT OF THE WORLD.** By Annie Besant. Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. 82 pp. Price. Re. 1/4/- (cloth), -/12/- (board).

The book contains three lectures delivered by the author at a convention of the Theosophical Society held in Benares in 1920. They give the author's view of the world and the way in which the world is guided and directed. The lectures combine scriptural and scientific truths with occult teachings. The printing and the get-up of the book are good.

**EDUCATION AS SERVICE.** By J. Krishnamurti. Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. 75 pp. Price -/12/- (board) Re. 1/4/- (cloth).

The book expounds four essential qualifications of a teacher, namely, love, discrimination, disinterestedness and good conduct, to each of which a chapter has been devoted. It is expected to be appreciated by those interested in teaching. The printing and the get-up are good.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### R. K. MISSION HOME OF SERVICE BENARES

The twenty-ninth annual report of the above premier and one of the oldest philanthropic institutions of the Ramakrishna Mission for the year 1929 is to hand. It is a very nice record of service done to the poor *Nārāyanas* in many different ways.

The work of the Home may be divided into the following heads:

(A) *Indoor General Hospital*: The total number of new cases admitted was 1,562, of whom 974 were cured, 124 left treatment, 102 left protection or were otherwise discharged, 180 remained under treatment in the closing month of the year and 232 died. The total number of surgical cases was 228.

(B) *Refuge for the Aged Men*: The Home had 7 permanent invalids in the Refuge.

(C) *Refuge for Women Invalids*: The Home has a house at Dasaswamedh for accommodating helpless, aged and invalid women. It had 14 members there and this was all it could accommodate. It is keenly feeling the necessity of acquiring a piece of land and erecting a big block for extending this service to many more deserving cases.

(D) *Girls' Home*: There were 7 girls in the Women's Department of the Home, who were receiving education under a Lady Superintendent. They participated in the general work of the female hospital which is entirely run by voluntary lady workers. All these girls belong to respectable families and were studying at the local Girls' High School and College. They were being so trained as would help them to face the present situation of the society or, better still, to devote their lives to the service of the country and humanity.

(E) *Home for Paralytic Patients*: During the year 8 paralytic cases were accommodated and treated in the Home.

(F) *Dharamasāla for the Poor and the Helpless*: About 200 people were given shelter and food or either during the year.

(G) *Outdoor Dispensary*: 31,526 new cases attended the Outdoor Dispensary and the number of repeated cases was 47,187. The daily average attendance was 217 and the total number of operation cases was 704.

(H) *Outdoor Help to Invalids and Poor Ladies of Respectable Families*: The Home had 218 permanent recipients of such outdoor relief which cost it Rs. 2,209-14-8 in

money and 150 mds. 11 srs. 10 ch. of rice and *atta* besides clothings and blankets.

(I) *Special and Occasional Relief* : 975 persons came under this heading, being helped either with meal, clothing, passage-money, school-fees or the like.

The income of the Home under all heads including last year's balance came to Rs. 1,19,401-18-9 and the expenses to Rs. 89,560-11-8.

*The immediate needs of the Home are as follows* : (a) Endowments for beds for the sick and the invalid. The total cost of permanent endowment for each bed is Rs. 8,000 for the sick and Rs. 2,500 for the invalid. (b) Bedding and clothing. (c) Construction of a good kitchen and store-room in the female department. (d) Construction of an Invalid Home for women.

The Government of the United Provinces have made over to the Home of Service the sum of Rs. 25,000 for the acquisition of land and for the construction of a separate Women's Ward thereon. The price of the land to be acquired is Rs. 60,000 and the total cost of building the Ward has been estimated at Rs. 85,000. The sum of Rs. 15,588-8-0 has already been received. It is sincerely hoped that the balance will soon be forthcoming.

Any amount, great or small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by (i) *Hony. Asst. Secy., Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service, Benares City, U.P.*, or (ii) *The President, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, Bengal.*

#### R. K. MISSION SEVASHRAMA BRINDABAN

The Sevashrama completed its twenty-third year at the end of 1929. During the year under report, the number of both indoor and outdoor patients was greater than that of the previous year. The Indoor Hospital treated 274 patients, of whom 225 were cured, 38 passed away, 5 left treatment, and 6 remained. The Outdoor Dispensary treated 84,671 patients, of these 12,449 being new cases.

Through the generosity of Mrs. P. C. Kar, wife of Mr. P. C. Kar, Attorney-at-Law, Calcutta, a new Phthisis Ward was added to the Sevashrama which removed a long-felt want. It was opened by Mahatma Gandhiji.

Besides medical help the Sevashrama also rendered financial help wherever possible.

It disbursed Rs. 94/- to three helpless respectable ladies and two students.

During the year under review the total income of the Sevashrama was Rs. 6,430-8-8 and the total expenditure Rs. 5,444-8-8.

The immediate needs of the Sevashrama are : 1. A General Ward at an estimated cost of Rs. 7,000/-. 2. An Outdoor Dispensary, with an operation theatre, separate dispensing rooms for allopathic and homeopathic sections and a store room, at an estimated cost of Rs. 10,000/-. 3. A Guest House for the relatives of the patients coming from a great distance and sympathisers of the Sevashrama at Rs. 6,000/-. 4. A Bathing Ghat for pilgrims and people of the locality, as well as a protective embankment at an estimated cost of Rs. 10,000/-.

The monthly income of the Sevashrama is about Rs. 300/-, which can hardly meet the current expenditure of the institution. A stable Permanent Fund is, therefore, necessary. Anyone who desires to perpetuate the memory of his departed friends or relatives, can do so by building one or more rooms at a cost of Rs. 1,000/- each or removing any one or more needs of the Sevashrama mentioned above.

Contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by 1. *The President, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, Bengal.* 2. *The Hony. Secy., Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Brindaban, Dt. Muttra, U.P.*

#### R. K. MATH CHARITABLE DISPENSARY MADRAS

We have received a brief review of the work done by the above institution during the past half-year (January—June 1930). A comparative statement of the number of patients treated there shows that during the period under review the number was much greater than that in the previous periods, being as many as 11,899.

The present shed with its single room is quite insufficient to accommodate the doctor, his assistants, the stock of medicines and the ever-increasing number of patients. An operation room has also become an urgent necessity.

It has, therefore, been proposed to erect a building on a suitable plot of land at an estimated cost of Rs. 10,000. Funds are required also to meet the increased recurring expenditure occasioned by the rise in the number of patients and the necessity to

engage Irish assistants to the doctor. The want of modern appliances and outfits due to lack of funds is also being keenly felt. Any contribution towards the above objects will be thankfully received and acknowledged by Swami Yatiswarananda, President, Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras.

#### R. K. MISSION SEVA SAMITI KARIMGANJ, SYLHET, ASSAM

The above institution has passed the twelfth year of its humble but useful service by the end of 1929 and has placed before the public a report of the work done during the past three years. In 1929 it was incorporated with the Ramakrishna Mission Seva Samiti of Sylhet and has since then been guided by it.

The activities of the institution consisted of (i) the reading and discussion of various

scriptures and the lives and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, (ii) arranging meetings and gatherings on occasions like the birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, (iii) providing and giving help to a few students, (iv) running a Lower Primary School, (v) observing the birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna, Buddha, Jesus, Swami Vivekananda and others accompanied with worship, *Bhajana* and feeding the poor, (vi) distributing Homeopathic medicines to poor people, (vii) nursing the sick, (viii) giving occasional relief to helpless persons both in coin and kind, and (ix) helping the people in times of flood and famine.

At the end of 1929 the receipts including the previous year's balance amounted to Rs. 664-11-6 and the expenditure to Rs. 627-8-8.

#### SIND AND KISHOREGANJ RELIEF

We have received the following appeal from the Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, dated the 18th September :

Readers of newspapers are aware of the devastation caused by the Indus floods in the Larkana, Shikarpur and Sukkur districts of Sind, affecting thousands of people. To make matters worse hundreds of Hindu homes were looted and set fire to by Mahomedan hooligans in the Sukkur district. Many a village has thus been completely deserted and presents a weird spectacle. The Hindu inhabitants of these villages have taken shelter in near-by towns and are faced with destitution of the worst type. To alleviate their distress we have opened three relief centres at Nasirabad in the Larkana district, Rustam-Khanpur in the Shikarpur district, and Ghotki-Rohri in the Sukkur district, from which some 1,500 people are being helped with weekly doles of foodstuffs, besides clothes and utensils. Fodder is also being supplied.

Last week's report from our Mirzapur centre, in the Kishoreganj subdivision, Bengal, indicates that the condition is growing from bad to worse, and that there is no chance of improvement till the next crop is ready. This means that we shall have to continue our relief work for another couple of months. The other relief parties having closed their work presumably for want of funds, hundreds of families are beseeching us for help. Their appeal is irresistible. Seeing the gravity of the situation our workers have added 14 villages to the Mirzapur centre. There are many more villages which are feeling the pinch of hunger, and unless relief is quickly extended to them it will lead to deplorable consequences.

In the last three weeks we distributed to 1,493 people belonging to 31 villages 281 mds. 34 srs. of rice, 101 pieces of new cloth, and 647 pieces of aluminium utensils. The want of adequate funds is a serious handicap not only against extension of the work, but also against maintaining that already started. Any contribution will be thankfully received and acknowledged by (1) The President, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, Bengal, and (2) The Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 182A, Mukhtarab Babu Street, Calcutta.

# Prabuddha Bharata

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Number 11

“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

“Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

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## AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

63, ST. GEORGE'S ROAD, S.W.,  
LONDON,  
30th May, 1896.

DEAR M,

Your letter reached just now. Of course you were not jealous, but all of a sudden were inspired with sympathy for poor India. Well, you need not be frightened. Wrote a letter to mother church weeks ago, but have not been able to get a line from her yet. I am afraid the whole party have taken orders and entered a Catholic convent—four old maids are enough to drive any mother to a convent. I had a beautiful visit with Prof. Max Müller. He is a saint—a Vedântist through and through. What think you?—has been a devoted admirer of my old Master for years! He has written an article on my Master in the *Nineteenth Century*, which will soon come out. We had long talks on Indian things. I wish I had half his love for India. We are going to start another little magazine here. What about the *Brahmavâdin*? Are you pushing it? If four pushful old maids cannot push a journal I am blown. You will hear from me now and then. I am not a pin to be lost under a bushel. I am having classes here just now. I begin Sunday lectures from next week. The classes are very big and are in the house. We have rented it for the season. Last night I made a dish. It was such a delicious mixture of saffron, lavender, mace, nutmeg, cubebs, cinnamon, cloves, cardamom, cream, lime-juice, onions, raisins, almonds, pepper and rice, that I myself could not eat it. There was no asafœtida though, that would have made it smoother to swallow.

Yesterday I went to a marriage *à la mode*. Miss Muller, a rich lady, a friend who has adopted a Hindu boy and to help my work has taken rooms in this house,

took us to see it. One of her nieces was married to somebody's nephew I suppose. What tiring nonsense! I am glad you do not marry. Good-bye, love to all. No more time as I am going to lunch with Miss MacLeod.

Yours ever affly.,  
VIVEKANANDA

## CYCLIC REST AND CHANGE

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

This whole universe is a case of lost balance. All motion is the struggle of the disturbed universe to regain its equilibrium, which, as such, cannot be motion. Thus in regard to the internal world it would be a state which is beyond thought, for thought itself is a motion. Now when all indication is towards perfect equilibrium by expansion and the whole universe is rushing towards it, we have no right to say that that state can never be attained. Again it is impossible that there should be any variety whatsoever in that state of equilibrium. It must be homogeneous, for as long as there are even two atoms they will attract and repel each other and disturb the balance. Therefore, this state of equilibrium is one of unity, of rest and of homogeneity. In the language of the internal, this state of equilibrium is not thought, nor body, nor anything which we call an attribute. The only thing which we can say it will retain is what is its own nature, as existence, self-consciousness and blissfulness.

This state in the same way cannot be two. It must only be a unit, and all fictitious distinctions of I, thou, etc., all the different variations must vanish, as they belong to the state of change or *Mâyâ*. It may be said that this state of change has come now upon the Self, showing that before this, it had the state of rest and liberty; that at present the state of differentiation is the only real state, and the state of homogeneity is the primitive crudeness, out of which this changeful state is manufactured, and it will be only

degeneration to go back to the state of undifferentiation. This argument would have some weight if it could be proved that these two states, i.e., homogeneity and heterogeneity, are the only two states happening but once through all time. What happens once must happen again and again. Rest is followed by change,—the universe. But that must have been preceded by other changes, and will be succeeded by other rests. It would be ridiculous to think that there was a period of rest and then came this change which will go on for ever. Every particle in nature shows that it is coming again and again to periodic rest and change.

This interval between one period of rest and another is called a *Kalpa*. But this *Kalpik* rest cannot be one of perfect homogeneity, for in that case there would be an end to any future manifestation. Now to say that the present state of change is one of great advance in comparison to the preceding state of rest is simply absurd, because in that case the coming period of rest being much more advanced in time must be much more perfect!! There is no progression or digression in nature. It is showing again and again the same forms. In fact the word law means this. But there is a progression with regard to souls. That is to say, the souls get nearer to their own natures and in each *Kalpa* large numbers of them get deliverance from being thus whirled around. It may be said the individual soul being a part of the universe and nature, returning again and again, there cannot be any liberty

for the soul, for in that case the universe has to be destroyed. The answer is that the individual soul is an assumption through *Mâyâ* and it is no more a reality than Nature itself. In reality, this individual soul is the unconditioned absolute *Brahman* (the Supreme).

All that is real in Nature is *Brahman*, only it appears to be this variety, or Nature, through the superimposition of *Mâyâ*. *Mâyâ* being illusion cannot be said to be real, yet it is producing the phenomena. If it be asked, how can *Mâyâ* herself being illusion produce all this, our answer is that what is produced being also ignorance, the producer must also be that. How can ignorance be produced by knowledge? So this *Mâyâ* is acting in two ways as nescience and science (relative knowledge) and this science after destroying

nescience or ignorance, is itself also destroyed. Thus *Mâyâ* destroys herself and what remains is the Absolute, the Essence of existence, knowledge and bliss. Now whatever is reality in nature is this Absolute, and Nature coming to us in three forms of God, conscious and unconscious, i.e., God, personal souls and unconscious beings, the reality of all these is the Absolute. The reality of all these is the Absolute, through *Mâyâ* seen to be difference; but the vision of God is the nearest to the reality and the highest. The idea of personal God is the highest idea which man can have. All the attributes attributed to God are true in the same sense as are the attributes of Nature. Yet we must never forget that the personal God is the very Absolute seen through *Mâyâ*.

## THE ECONOMIC VIEWS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

BY THE EDITOR

### I

Many of our readers, we have no doubt, are anxious to know what were the economic views of Swami Vivekananda. The great Swami threw light on many intricate problems of Indian life, secular and spiritual. Did he not give us any solution of our economic problems? In the following pages we shall make an attempt to find an answer to this question. It is well known that the Swami was eager to solve the bread-problem of his countrymen. He said again and again that one cannot practise religion with an empty stomach. There must be food, nourishing food. The wants of the body must be fulfilled. Then only we can devote our mind to higher things. He considered that much of our present degradation, not merely material, was due to our physical weakness. In course of a lecture at Madras, he said: "Physical weakness is the cause at least of one-third of our miseries. We are lazy; we cannot work; we cannot

combine; we do not love each other; we are intensely selfish; not three of us can come together without hating each other, without being jealous of each other. That is the state in which we are,—hopelessly disorganised mobs, immensely selfish, fighting each other for centuries as to whether a certain mark is to be put on our forehead this way or that way; writing volumes and volumes upon such momentous questions as to whether the look of a man spoils my food or not! This we have been doing for the last few centuries. We cannot expect anything high from a race whose whole brain-energy has been occupied in such wonderfully beautiful problems and researches! And are we not ashamed of ourselves? Aye, sometimes we are, but though we think these things frivolous, we cannot give them up. We think many things and never do them; parrot-like, thinking has become a habit with us, and never doing. What is the cause of that? Physical weakness. This sort of weak brain is not able to do any-

thing; we must strengthen it. First of all, our young men must be strong. Religion will come afterwards. Be strong, my young friends; this is my advice to you. . . . You will understand the mighty genius and the mighty strength of Krishna better with a little of strong blood in you. You will understand the *Upanishads* better and the glory of the *Atman*, when your body stands firm upon your feet, and you feel yourselves as men." (*Complete Works*, III, pp. 241-242). The Swami traced much of our present degradation to physical weakness. And he said on another occasion that such was the nature of the Indians that as soon as they would have material well-being, they would not, like other peoples, sink into the mire of worldliness, but would automatically soar into the spiritual empyrean. It was natural, therefore, that the Swami would think earnestly of the material problems of India, the economic ones not excepted. In fact, his going to the West had for one of its main objects, as he admitted on more than one occasion, the finding of means in the West for the amelioration of the miseries of India, evidently physical sufferings—for, in matters spiritual, he never thought that India had anything to learn from the West, in fact he strongly repudiated the idea whenever it was even indirectly suggested to him.

Yet it must be admitted that he had nowhere left any detailed scheme of his country's regeneration. Though his heart bled for the economic, political, and social sufferings of India, he had not left behind any *detailed* plan of how to remove them. The reason is not far to seek. For one thing he was sure that once the soul of India, which was religion, was awake, all other readjustments would be automatically made. He concentrated his best powers on this supreme task,—how to awake the nation. He also held before it a vision of life which, once it caught its imagination, would inevitably lead to strenuous struggle in all directions of life. The Great Ones always act thus. They take

care of the mainspring of life and there inaugurate all necessary change and reform, and down the rolling centuries, its effect multiplies.

We said that a detailed scheme had not been left. But it is not difficult to discover his aim and purpose from what he said on many occasions. There are evidences that he pondered deeply on these problems, and these evidences are also eloquent of the conclusions to which he reached. Our attempt must necessarily be to understand and interpret those scattered utterances.

We have gone through all the available writings and utterances of the Swami and collected all the relevant passages. Our readers are aware that we published them serially under *Notes and Comments* from January to April. In the present article we shall have to reproduce them wherever necessary in order to substantiate our conclusions.

## II

Let us at the outset find out the secular outlook which the Swami proposed for India. We have very clear utterances on this subject. Writing in 1899, he said: "What we should have, is what we have not, perhaps what our forefathers even had not,—that which the *Yavanas* had,—that, impelled by the life-vibration of which is issuing forth in rapid succession from the great dynamo of Europe the electric flow of a tremendous power, vivifying the whole world. We want that. We want that energy, that love of independence, that spirit of self-sacrifice, that immovable fortitude, that dexterity in action, that bond of unity of purpose, that thirst for improvement. Checking a little the constant looking back to the past, we want that expansive vision infinitely projected forward; and we want that intense spirit of activity (*rajas*) which will flow through our every vein, from head to foot." Again: "Without enjoyment, renunciation can never come; first enjoy, then you can renounce. . . . The *Bauddhas* declared: 'Nothing is more desirable in life than

*Moksha*; whoever you are, come one and all to take it.' I ask: 'Is that ever possible?' You are a householder, you must not concern yourself much with things of that sort, you do your *Svadharmā*,—thus say the Hindu scriptures. Exactly so. . . . The Hindu scriptures say: 'No doubt, *Moksha* is far superior to *Dharma*; but *Dharma* should be finished first of all.' . . . Non-injury is right. 'Resist not evil' is a great thing,—these are indeed grand principles; but the *Shāstras* say: 'Thou art a householder, if anyone smites thee on thy cheek and thou dost not return him an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, thou wilt verily be a sinner.' Manu says: 'When one has come to kill you, there is no sin in killing him, even though he is a *Brāhmaṇa*.' This is very true and this is a thing which should not be forgotten. Heroes only enjoy the world. Show your heroism, apply, according to circumstances, the four-fold political maxims of conciliation, bribery, sowing dissensions and open war, to win over your adversary, and enjoy the world,—then you will be *Dhārmika*. . . . Do your *Svadharmā*—this is the truth, the truth of truths. This is my advice to you, my beloved co-religionists. Of course, do not do any wrong, do not injure or tyrannise anyone, but try to do good to others as much as you can. But to passively submit to wrong done by others is a sin,—with the householder; he must try to pay them back in their own coin then and there. The householder must earn money with great effort and enthusiasm, and by that must support and bring comforts to his own family and to others, and perform good works as far as possible. If you cannot do that, how do you profess to be a man? You are not a householder even,—what to talk of *Moksha* for you!!"

Again in course of a lecture at Ramnad, in the year 1897, he said: "There is a tendency to bind everyone down by the same laws as those by which the *Sannyāsin* is bound, and that is a great mistake. But for that a good

deal of the poverty and the misery that you see in India need not have been. A poor man's life is hemmed in and bound down by tremendous spiritual and ethical laws for which he has no use. Hands off! Let the poor fellow enjoy himself a little, and then he will raise himself up and renunciation will come to him of itself."

We have to carefully consider the passages quoted above. From these it is clear that Swamiji felt that the life of the generality of people in India should not be in all respects tuned to extreme ethical principles. He was not for the predominantly *Nivṛtti* ideal for the masses. He asked them to follow their *Svadharmā*, i.e., the dictates of their nature with a view to work them out. Swamiji clearly says that a poor man has no use for the high spiritual and ethical laws. What does that show? It means that he recognised that in the achievement of material prosperity the high ethical principles cannot always be maintained and that the masses should conduct their life in spite of these lapses. This may seem a dangerous doctrine. But its justification is not far to seek. We have again and again pointed out that a mere formal observance of high moral principles will little benefit us, on the other hand, injure us a great deal, if there is not an inner preparedness. It is no good prescribing high principles unless there is the capacity to practise it. We must prescribe to everyone according to his capacity. This is a well known principle of Hinduism. For him that is his highest religion. For we must remember that our purpose is to *help* a man onwards and not merely to make him formally moral. And in order to help him, we must allow him scope enough to express his inner nature, however vile, in action and life. Otherwise his progress would be stunted. We have, therefore, to recognise gradations of ideals, and in the case of the majority of people, an ideal which will undoubtedly have in it much that is undesirable (as considered from the highest standpoint) along with what is good.



A few words in explanation are necessary here. We once wrote that we need not be unnecessarily squeamish about exploitation. This appears to have shocked some readers. We know, from a high moral standpoint, this is a reprehensible statement to make. But perhaps we did not mean exactly what those readers have understood by it. We did not mean that we should also, like the Westerners, indulge in *deliberate* exploitation of weak, helpless peoples. We believe a distinction can easily be made between exploitation in the Western sense and the exploitation caused inevitably by healthy normal foreign trade. As we showed on several occasions, we want money badly for the building up of our life and also for self-defence. But not for aggression. This money cannot come from internal trade only. Foreign trade is necessary. And this will certainly entail some amount of exploitation. This may be immoral. But it is unthinkable that because of this India should remain poor, helpless, undeveloped and defenceless. We believe from what we have quoted above from Swamiji that we are right in thinking that the evil that would accompany foreign trade can be condoned in view of the greater benefit derived. As we pointed out, Swamiji had made a definite statement in favour of this view.

We have, therefore, to do our normal best to achieve material prosperity, such as an average householder always wants. We must remember that the standard of prosperity is always a relative one. In an age in which no material comfort was known, the present-day standard would surely not have been dreamt of. But when all other peoples are living according to a certain standard, we cannot expect that India alone would live in the primitive style. Besides, it is wrong to think that such simplicity was always the way of India. If we may believe our ancient literature, we find that our forefathers enjoyed the height of luxury. Many evidences are found in corroboration of this fact. Why

should India in the present age make its ideal different? Some would say that simple living and high thinking should be the ideal of India. We think not, and we believe that in this we are following the Swami Vivekananda. We have already quoted him as saying that the Indian should be allowed to enjoy. We shall quote further passages in confirmation :

“How can renunciation come to the people of a country, in whose minds the desires of *bhoga* (enjoyment) have not been the least satisfied? For this reason, find out, first of all, the ways and means by which man can get enough to eat, and have enough luxuries to enable them to enjoy life a little; and then gradually, true *vairāgyam* (dispassion) will come, and they will be fit and ready to realise religion in life. The people of England and America, how full of *rajas* they are! They have become satisfied with all sorts of worldly *bhogas*.” This passage implies that we must have enough *bhoga*, enjoyment of the goods of this world. The last two sentences are significant. They as it were illustrate what Swamiji enunciates in the preceding sentences. The following quotations are more explicit :

“We talk foolishly against material civilisation. The grapes are sour. Even taking all that foolishness for granted, in all India there are, say, a hundred thousand really spiritual men and women. Now, for the spiritualisation of these, must three hundred millions be sunk in savagery and starvation? Why should any starve? How was it possible for the Hindus to have been conquered by the Mahomedans? It was due to the Hindus’ ignorance of material civilisation. . . Material civilisation, nay, even luxury is necessary to create work for the poor.” “First make the people of the country stand on their legs by rousing their inner power, first let them learn to have good food and clothes and plenty of enjoyment—and then tell them how to be free from the bondage of enjoyment.” These passages set all our doubts at rest.

Here it is explicitly stated that there must be luxuries in India in order that there may be enough occupations for all, and also that India cannot follow the so-called ancient ideal of simplicity in material life. He makes that responsible for our subjection to Islamic rule. Surely the Swami cannot want us to continue in that abject condition. He taunts us for our foolish inveighing against material civilisation. He says that the people must have *plenty* of enjoyment.

### III

The next point to determine is about the means of attaining material prosperity. Two ways are before us: the ancient way of small-scale industry; and the modern method of large-scale production. What has Swamiji to say about these means? Does he favour small-scale industrial method? Or the modern industrial method? One thing is very significant. We know that even in the days of the Swami, modern industrialism was in full swing. Small-scale method had been long supplanted by modern industrialism. And the evils of the modern system were also quite apparent, in fact more apparent in his days than now. In those days the labour movement was in an embryonic state. Labour legislations to ameliorate the conditions of workers had just begun. Now workers are much better treated in every country than in his days. Surely the Swami was not slow to observe them. If he had wanted that India should not have anything to do with modern industrialism, he would have warned us against it and definitely asked us to adhere to our ancient methods. But he has not done so. It may be said that he did not like to go into details, and that is why he did not give us a clear warning. But this argument does not seem convincing. He analysed Western civilisation carefully. He made many pronouncements on it on various occasions. Surely his silence on this point must be explained differ-

ently. But, no, he was not completely silent on the evils of Western industrialism. He wrote on one occasion:

"Machinery in a small proportion is good, but too much of it kills man's initiative and makes a lifeless machine of him. The men in factories are doing the same monotonous work, day after day, night after night, year after year, each batch of men doing one special bit of work—such as fashioning the heads of pins, or uniting the ends of threads, or moving backwards and forwards with the loom for a whole life. And the result is, that the loss of that special job means death to them—they find no other means of living and starve. Doing routine work like a machine, one becomes a lifeless machine. For that reason, one serving as a schoolmaster or a clerk for a whole life-time, ends by turning a stupendous fool."

We may say that we have carefully gone through the whole of the Swami's seven volumes of works,—we have found only this one condemnation of machinery. But what conclusion are we entitled to draw from this utterance? Is it that the Swami did not want that machines (large-scale) should be introduced in India and that we should ply our ancient simple machines? We do not think we can legitimately infer this. It may be that though he was aware of the attendant evils of machinery, he yet felt that they cannot be avoided. For against the single condemnation of machinery produced above, we have many passages in the Swami's seven volumes of works, which testify that he wanted us to follow the West in our industrial reorganisation. Let us quote:

"You must learn the power of organisation of the Europeans."

"The Hindus have to learn a little bit of materialism from the West and teach them a little bit of spirituality." [Here the phrase "a little bit" should not be understood literally. For surely we are not to teach the West only a *little bit* of spirituality, but as much as possible. Similarly, we must also learn

as much of materialism as possible and desirable.]

"By the study of this religion, the Western nation will have increasing regard and sympathy for us,—even already these have grown to some extent. In this way, if we have their real sympathy and regard we should learn from them the sciences bearing on our material life, thereby qualifying ourselves better for the struggle of existence. . . . They (the Western nations) will remain our teachers in all material concerns."

"Have we to learn anything else, have we to learn anything from the world? We have, perhaps, to gain a little in material knowledge, in the power of organisation, in the ability to handle powers, organising powers, in bringing the best results out of the smallest of causes. This perhaps to a certain extent we may learn from the West. . . . Yet, perhaps, some sort of materialism, toned down to our own requirements, would be a blessing to many of our brothers who are not yet ripe for the highest truths."

"As Western ideas of organisation and external civilisation are penetrating and pouring into our country, whether we will have them or not, so Indian spirituality and philosophy are deluging the lands of the West. None can resist it, no more can we resist some sort of material civilisation from the West."

"India has to learn from Europe the conquest of external nature, and Europe has to learn from India the conquest of internal nature."

"You have not the capacity to manufacture a needle and you dare to criticise the English,—fools! Sit at their feet and learn from them the arts, industries and the practicality necessary for the struggle of existence." [Surely the Swami did not mean the mere theoretical knowledge of material sciences, but also their practical application.]

"They (Western people) will, no doubt, be your *Guru* regarding practical sciences etc., for the improvement of

material conditions, and the people of our country will be their *Guru* in everything pertaining to religion."

"It would be better if the people got a little technical education that they might find work and earn their bread, instead of dawdling about and crying for service."

"What you have to do now is to establish a *Math* in every town and in every village. . . . A well-educated *Sādhu* should be at the head of that centre and under him there should be departments for teaching practical science and arts, with a specialist *Sannyāsin* in charge of each of those departments."

"We need technical education, and all else which may develop the industries, so that men, instead of seeking for service, may earn enough to provide for themselves, and save something against the rainy day."

"If we are to live at all, we must be a scientific nation." [Evidently both theoretically and practically.]

"If the money that they (Marwaris) lay out in their business and with which they make only a small percentage of profit, were utilised in conducting a few factories and workshops instead of filling the pockets of Europeans by letting them reap the benefit of most of the transactions, then it would not only conduce to the well-being of the country but bring by far the greater amount of profit to them as well."

"If I can get some unmarried graduates, I may try to send them over to Japan and make arrangements for their technical education there, so that when they come back, they may turn their knowledge to the best account for India. What a good thing will that be! . . . There, in Japan, you find a fine assimilation of knowledge, and not its indigestion as we have here. They have taken everything from the Europeans, but they remain Japanese all the same, and have not turned European." [In this connection we may remember the inspiring letter he wrote to his Madras disciples from

Japan on his way to America, telling them to visit Japan and emulate her example.]

From all these quotations made by us, and we have sought to be exhaustive, we can well infer the attitude of Swamiji towards large-scale production. The last quotation shows his great admiration for the Japanese achievements. In Japan, we know, Western industrialism has its full sway. In the preceding quotation he wants the Marwaris to open factories in order to manufacture the goods which they import from the foreign countries. In several other passages, he urges the introduction of technical education in India. By technical education he certainly did not mean learning the tricks of our ancient primitive implements, but of the modern machineries. Indeed the Swami wanted that the material sciences should be mastered by Indians and applied to their daily life as they are being done in the West. He again and again said that in these things the West should be our *Guru*. Evidently he did not mean only a theoretical knowledge of the sciences, but also their application to our industrial life. For he said that the Western people will be our *Guru* regarding practical sciences etc., for "the improvement of our material conditions." The authors of *The Life of the Swami Vivekananda*, the Swami's Eastern and Western Disciples, also hold the same view. They write in pp. 201 and 202 of the fourth volume of the *Life*: "The tremendous power which the West exerts over the world lies in its material development of the forces of nature through the application of science, in its power of organisation and co-operation, in its dexterity in action, and in its intense energy. The East, on the other hand, bent on the realisation of the transcendental verities of life, never developed the above traits to an appreciable extent and can never combat the West on its own grounds, as the latter cannot approach the East in the spiritual sphere. The salvation of the West depends as much upon the

acceptance of the highest rationalistic principles of the Vedanta, as that of the East upon the learning and the practical application of the sciences from the West. 'Science coupled with Vedanta' was the ideal. 'Thus India would ever be the acknowledged *Guru* to the West in religion and the latter would be the teacher to India in material science, and mutual respect, faith and sympathy for one another would prevail.' We, therefore, infer that Swamiji was in favour of introducing the Western industrial methods in India.

#### IV

Here it may be contended that though the Swami meant the learning of practical sciences from the West, he might not have intended the Western factory system,--science may well be utilised in the cottage-industry system also. We have little to say in reply to this. We have already partly replied to it. No one says that cottage industry is a sin. If one applies modern technical skill to it, well and good. But we have no right to infer that practical science was meant by the Swami to be applied to cottage industry *only*. There is no evidence of such an intention of the Swami anywhere in his writings and utterances. On the other hand, he clearly speaks of "factories." Besides, the main point is not cottage industry or factory system, but the *production of large amount of goods with the least expense of money and power*. If cottage industry can do so, well and good. If it can compete with the other systems of production, that is quite welcome. But practically considered, that is impossible. The large-scale system must, therefore, have its way. But we need not insist on it. Whether there is to be factory system, or cottage-industry system, is immaterial. In our opinion, the *forms* of modern industrialism have been changing and will change. But the essential idea remains; the utilisation of natural forces in the production of goods on the basis of organisation. How far mechanical skill would go and what

would be the best way of generating and utilising power and what would be the most paying method of organisation must be left to specialists to determine. We are sure we have not yet seen the last of their knowledge and skill. Much more is yet to come. In fact if we study the modern industrial conditions, we may well say that we are on the threshold of a second industrial revolution. A writer, writing sometime ago in a well-known American weekly, declared : "The superpower era has dawned—the era of energy free and fluid as water, shot by high tension lines all over the country. We catch a first glimpse of a second industrial revolution which promises to be as far-reaching in its social and economic effects as was the first." The first industrial revolution was brought about chiefly by Watt and his condensing steam-engine. Mass-production by machineries took the place of manual skill of individual artisans. The second industrial revolution that is just setting in in America, is being marked by the wide distribution of electric energy and the substitution of comparatively few central stations for hundreds of thousands of individual factory power plants. Power is no longer confined. From these few central stations power will be distributed to the distantest corners of the country, with the result that "no longer is the huge city, with its swarming hordes lodged in tenements, its huddled factories, its disgraceful subways and street cars, to dominate society. Industry is migrating or establishing itself anew in the small town. The current of emigration which has been steadily flowing to the city for decades is now flowing back to the country."

This is a very hopeful development. This new development when it will take place fully, will minimise much of the miseries that now accompany industrialism. This is no idle dream. An experiment was made in America along this line by a well-known Electric Company. The result was a tremendous success. The new process has set in in all

seriousness. "What we behold is a centralisation of energy production and a decentralization of industry." Inter-connection of central stations and superpower means a change in human conditions fully as significant as that brought about by the steam engine. An experiment in the Middle West of U. S. A. was made, and on the basis of its proved results, the social and the economic consequences that will follow if all central stations are connected and if superpower displaces hundreds of thousands of individualistically operated steam engines, can be well predicted. These consequences are expected to be happier than the present industrial conditions. If these hopes prove true, much of the objection that is now made to factory system, would prove pointless. But let us not think that this means a return to our cottage-industry system. It is a higher development of the present industrial technique and not a sliding back. Only this development humanises modern industrialism.

We have digressed long from our main theme. We think our readers are convinced that the Swami was in favour of modern industrialism in India, though he might have guessed the evils that would necessarily accompany it. But evidently he did not flinch back. His attitude towards the modern developments in India was touchingly revealed in an utterance recorded by Sister Nivedita in her *The Master as I Saw Him*. The Sister and a few others had gone on a visit to Gopaler Ma (a lady disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, —herself a great saint) in her little room in a temple compound over the Ganges a few miles off Calcutta. "Nothing could seem so dream-like, as, in the midst of our busy hurrying world, the thought of spots like this little cell of Gopaler Ma, enshrining her silent intensity of peace." When they returned and spoke of the visit to the Swami, he said : "Ah! this is the *old* India that you have seen, the India of prayers and

tears, of vigils and fasts, that is passing away, never to return!" The Swami was indeed fully aware of the changes India was passing through and the new conditions that would emerge, and he asked us to prepare for them. He knew that modernism in the economic and industrial life also cannot be resisted. The younger brother of the Swami, Mahendra Nath Datta, who had been with him during his second visit to London, lately wrote in a Bengali monthly that the Swami was in those days always talking about the electrical developments of America and expressed a fervent wish that there were similar developments in India. Mr. Datta undertook education in Electrical Engineering while in the West. When the Swami learnt this, he expressed great satisfaction, saying that that was what was most wanted in India.

It has been argued that the Swami afterwards changed his views and in confirmation the following quotation is made from Sister Nivedita: "At the end of his last visit to America, he told me that on first seeing Western civilisation he had been greatly attracted by it, but now he saw mainly its greed and power. Like others, he had accepted without thought the assumption that machinery would be a boon to agriculture, but he could now see that while the American farmer, with his several square miles to farm, might be the better for machines, they were likely to do little but harm on the tiny farmlands of the Indian peasantry. The problem was quite different in the two cases. Of that alone, he was firmly convinced. In everything, including the problem of distribution, he listened with suspicion to all arguments that would work for the elimination of small interests, appearing in this as in so many other things, as the perfect, though unconscious, expression of the spirit of the old Indian civilisation. A strong habit of combination he was able to admire, but what beauty of combination was there, amongst a pack of wolves?" (*The Master as I Saw Him*). This informa-

tion about the changes of the Swami's views, coming from such a source as the Sister Nivedita, surely deserves careful consideration. Let us read the passage between the lines. One sentence is very significant: the Swami talks of the unsuitability of the mechanical method to Indian conditions in reference to *agriculture* only and not to the industries properly so-called, and of agriculture also not as regards principles, but expediency,—our tiny farmlands are not amenable to large-scale mechanical farming, and he admitted that the American farmers were better for the machines. Can we legitimately conclude that the Swami changed his views as regards the need of the modern industrial methods in India? We think not. There are of course two other sentences which have to be carefully considered. The one is the Swami's own words,—he was disgusted with the greed and power of the West. That cannot be taken as a condemnation of Western industrial methods, for there is no reason to think that the Swami thought industrialism to be the cause of their greed. Sister Nivedita says that in everything, including the problem of distribution, he listened with suspicion to all arguments that would work for the elimination of small interests. This is also not a proof of the Swami's rejection of industrialism. It is well known that many Western upholders of industrialism are still anxious to safeguard the small interests. This need not necessarily be by holding on to cottage-industry system.

We would not have thus understood this statement of the Sister, had we not convincing proof that the Swami believed to the last that we have to learn practical sciences from the West. During his last voyage from the West, from Egypt to Bombay, the Swami had as a fellow-passenger an American Missionary in the steamer. The Missionary gentleman published his reminiscences of the Swami in *The Indian Social Reformer* in 1923. He writes :

"One evening, over the nuts and coffee, the conversation had turned on India's preparedness for self-government. . . .

"Suddenly Vivekananda blazed.

" 'Let England teach us the fine art of Government,' he burst forth, 'for in that art Britain is the leader of the nations,' then turning to me, 'let America teach us agriculture and science and your wonderful knack of doing things, for here we sit at your feet—but'—and Vivekananda's pleasant voice grew harsh with bitterness—'let no nation presume to teach India religion, for here India shall teach the world.' "

This shows that the Swami still expected India to learn agriculture and science and skilful ways of doing things from America. The voyage was made towards the end of 1900. The Swami passed away in July, 1902. This utterance of the Swami was a later one than that mentioned by Sister Nivedita.

But this is not all. There is still another evidence in favour of our interpretation. There is a piece of Bengali writing of his, as yet unpublished, which is considered by the Ramakrishna Order as one of the most precious pronouncements of the Swami. In this many important problems have been discussed

and answered, the economic problems not excepted. In it the Swami has made the following two statements :

Writing about the future development of the central monastery, the Swami says : "Now the idea is to develop this Math by degrees into a finished university, in which, along with philosophical and religious culture, there will be a fully equipped Technical Institute; this would be attended to first. Other branches will be gradually added afterwards."

And describing his plan of work for India, he says : "In Central India, near Hazaribagh and such other districts, there can yet be had fertile, well-watered, healthy land, without much difficulty. We shall have to secure a big plot of land in that region and construct a big technical school, and by degrees, workshops etc., on it. . . ."

We believe these two quotations are conclusive. We, therefore, conclude that the Swami wanted that Indians should learn Western industrial methods and apply them to their conditions. He was not for limiting the industrial life to cottage industry.

We have tried to interpret the Swami according to our light and understanding. We do not claim to be infallible.

## DISCOURSES BY SWAMI PREMANANDA

Sunday, March 5, 1916. It was the annual general meeting of the Ramakrishna Mission. Swamis Brahma-nanda, Premananda, Saradananda and Subodhananda, many other monks of the Order and many lay members of the Mission had assembled in the Visitors' Room of the Monastery at Belur. When the agenda of the meeting was gone through, Swami Premananda thus spoke to all present :

"Elephants have two sets of teeth, one outside—the tusks, and another inside to munch food. The activities of our Mission are like the elephant's tusks. Whatever work you may do,—conducting *Sevâshramas* or doing relief

work, unless you have character, all will be in vain. What is wanted is character, purity, steadfast devotion to God. If you have them, you will prosper, otherwise you will totally fail. (*To the lay members*). It is no good being only members of the Mission. You must build up your own character, you must make the whole world your own through love, so that people may find inspiration in your selflessness, renunciation and purity. You must drive away all egoism and pride from your heart and consider yourselves as servants of the Lord and thus serve humanity.

"Our Master (Sri Ramakrishna) never

sought name and fame, and so they have come to him in profuse measure. Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda) often said in his later life that he was disgusted with name and fame. Be you all men of character. Do you grow into gods. Only then would the work of the Mission prosper. This is my earnest prayer to you all."

After this the meeting was dissolved.

That night, after meal, Swami Premananda came and sat on the bench on the ground floor overlooking the Ganges, and thus spoke to the monks and devotees assembled before him :

"In the world the mind is scattered on various things, on *Kâma* (lust) and *Kâncâna* (gold). It is the function of *Avidyâ* (Ignorance) not to allow the mind to be concentrated. But our task is to concentrate it. *Sâdhanâ* is nothing but the bringing together of the scattered mind. So long as there is the least desire in the mind, it cannot be absorbed in God. Along with meditation and repetition of the Lord's name, we must reason keenly and carefully,—we must search out the desires hiding in the dark corners of the mind and drive them away. This is what is called in the *Gîtâ* as 'saving the self by the self.' Thus we are to conquer the mind. We shall then find the Peace Everlasting within ourselves and become sages. Simply meditating or repeating God's names, without any effort at eradicating the desires of the mind, will not do.

"During my last visit at Dacca, I

used to talk day and night with the devotees. (*The Swami had lately returned from there where he had gone in the company of Swami Brahmananda and others.*) This would often cause insomnia. Of course I would repeat and explain only the words of the Master—myself I know nothing—yet I could not sleep at night. That was because I am but a small 'vessel'. But we have seen the Master going again and again into ecstasy and *Samâdhi*,—it was so natural with him. No impure person could ever live with and attend on the Master. I could not live with him without his grace. Now I wonder how I could do so.\*

"One day he went to see the performance of *Chaitanya-lîlâ* at the Star Theatre. Before he went, he said to me : 'If I fall into *Samâdhi* there, people would all turn towards me and there would be disturbance. If you find me about to go into *Samâdhi*, talk to me about various other things.' But when he went into the Theatre, he could not stop *Samâdhi*, try as he would. I began to repeat the name of God and then slowly he came down to the normal state. Such superconscious states were natural with him, and he had to struggle hard in order to hold his mind down in the normal state. But small 'vessels' as we are, we have to practise variously and hard in order to realise the state of *Samâdhi*. For us it is so hard to attain."

\*The Swami was for a long time a personal attendant of the Master. Sri Ramakrishna considered him the purest of his disciples.

"Arise, awake and see her seated here, on her eternal throne, rejuvenated, more glorious than she ever was—this motherland of ours. . . . Believe, believe, the decree has gone forth, the fiat of the Lord has gone forth—India must rise. . . . Up, up, the long night is passing, the day is appearing, the wave has risen, nothing will be able to resist its tidal fury."—Swami Vivekananda.



# MYSTIC INTROVERSION AND ITS SCIENTIFIC VALUE FOR THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE REAL\*

By ROMAIN ROLLAND

The intuitive workings of the "religious" spirit—in the wide sense in which I have consistently used the word—have been insufficiently studied by modern psychological science in the West and then too often by observers who are themselves lacking in every kind of "religious" inclination and so are ill equipped for the study, and involuntarily prone to depreciate an inner sense they do not themselves possess.

One of the best works devoted to this important subject is M. Ferdinand Morel's *Essay on Mystic Introversion*. It is securely based on the principles and methods of pathological psychophysiology and on the psycho-analysis of Freud, Janet, Jung, Bleuler, etc., and it handles the psychological study of several representative types of Hellenic-Christian mysticism with scrupulous care. His analysis of the Pseudo-Denis is particularly interesting; and his description of him is on the whole correct, in spite of the fact that in the appreciation wherein he comments upon his work and the conclusions to be deduced from it, the author does not manage to free himself from his preconceived theories drawn from the scientific pathology of the time.

Without being able within the limits of this note to enter into a close discussion such as his theses deserve, I should like briefly to point out their weak points as I see them and the truer interpretation that I should put upon them.

Almost all psychologists are possessed by the theory of Regression which appears to have been started by Th. Ribot. It is undoubtedly a true one

within the limited bounds of his psychopathological studies on functional disorganisation, but it has been erroneously extended to the whole realm of the mind, whether abnormal or normal.

Ribot laid down that "the psychological functions most rapidly attacked by disease were the most recently constituted ones, the last in point of time in the development of the individual (ontogenesis), and then reproduced on a general scale in the evolution of the species (phylogenesis)." Janet, Freud, and their followers have applied this statement to all the nervous affections, and from them to all the activities of the mind. From this it is only a step for them—a false step for us—to the conclusion that the most recently effected operations and the most rapidly worn out are the highest in the hierarchy, and that a return to the others is a retrogression in a backward sense, a fall of the mind.

At the outset let us determine what is meant by the "the supreme function" of the mind. It is what Janet calls "the function of the real," and he defines it as awareness of the present, of present action, the enjoyment of the present. He places "disinterested action and thought," which does not keep an exact account of present reality, on a lower level,—then imaginary representation at the bottom of the scale, that is to say, the whole world of imagination and fancy. Freud with his customary energy, asserts that reverie and all that emerges from it, is nothing but the debris of the first stage of evolution. And they all agree in opposing, like Bleuler, a "function of the unreal" akin to pure thought, to the so-called "function of the real," which they would term "the fine point of the soul," (to misuse the famous phrase of

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François de Sales by applying it—what irony!—to the opposite extreme).

Such a classification, which ascribes the highest rank to “interested” action and the lowest rank to concentration of thought, seems to me to stand self-convinced in the light of simple practical and moral common sense. And this depreciation of the most indispensable operation of the active mind—the withdrawal into oneself, to dream, to imagine, to reason,—is in danger of becoming a pathological aberration. The irreverent observer is tempted to say: “Physician, heal thyself!”

It seems to me that the transcendent value attributed by science to the idea of evolution should be taken with a pinch of salt. The admission of its indestructibility and universality without any exception, is in fact nothing more than the declaration of a continuous series (or sometimes discontinuous) of modifications and of differentiations in living matter. This biological process is not worthy to be raised to a dogma, forcing us to see far above and beyond us, suspended to some vague “greasy pole,” some equally vague mysterious supreme “Realisation” of the living being—not much less supernatural than the “Realisation” below and behind us (or in the depths) presupposed by religion in its various myths of primitive Eden. Eventually vital evolution would culminate in the inevitable extinction of the species by a process of exhaustion. How can we decide the exact moment when the path begins to go down on the further side instead of going up? There are as many reasons for believing that the most important of the diverse operations and functions of the mind are those which disappear last: for they are the very foundations of Being—and that the part so easily destroyed belongs to a superficial level of existence.

A great aesthete who is at the same time a scientist, and a creative artist—a complete man endowed with both reason and intuition, Edouard Monod-Herzen, has thus expressed it:

“The effects of the Cosmos antecedent to a given individual, whose substance still bears their trace, are to be distinguished from the contemporary effects which set their mark upon him each day. The first are his own inner property, and constitute his heredity. The second are his acquired property and constitute his adaptation.”

In what way then are his “acquired properties” superior in hierarchical order to his “innate possessions?” They are only so in point of time. And, continues E. Monod-Herzen, “the actual condition of the individual results from a combination of the two groups of possessions.”

Why should they be dissociated? If it is to meet the exigences of scientific investigation, it is not superfluous to remark that by its very definition primitive or “innate possessions” accommodate themselves better to such dissociation than “acquired possessions”—for the simple reason that the latter are posterior and necessarily presuppose what went before them.

As Ch. Baudouin, when he was trying to correct the deprecatory tendencies of psycho-analysis with regard to psychological “phenomena of recoil,” wrote on the subject of evolution:

“Evolution is not conceived as going from the reflex to instinct, from instinct to the higher psychological life, without appealing to successive inhibitions and their resultant introversions. At each step new inhibitions must intervene to prevent energy from immediately discharging itself in motive channels, together with introversions, inward storings of energy, until little by little thought is substituted for the inhibited action. . . . Thought (as John Dewey has shown) may be regarded as the result of suspended action, which the subject does not allow to proceed to its full realisation. Our reasonings are attempts in effigy. . . . It would therefore be a pity to confound introversion with open retrogression, since the latter marks a step backwards in the line of evolution”—(and I would add that it

is a retreat "without any idea of regaining lost ground and advancing again"—"while introversion is the indispensable condition of evolution and if it is a recoil, it is one of those recoils that render a forward thrust possible."

But let us come frankly to the case of great introversion, no longer in the mitigated form of normal thought—but complete, absolute, unmitigated, as we have been studying it in the case of the mystics.

To pathological psychology—and M. Ferdinand Morel accepts these conclusions) it is a return to a primary stage, to a intra-uterine state. And the symbolic words used to explain absorption in the Unity by the masters of mysticism, whether of India or of Alexandria, by the Areopagite or the two fourteenth century whirlwinds of the soul, Eckhart and Tauler: "*Grund, Urgrund, Boden, Wurzel, Wesen ohne Wesen, Indéfinité suressentielle*" . . . etc., add weight to this assumption, no less than the curious instinct which has given birth in Ramakrishna's India to the passionate worship of the "Mother," and in Christianity to that of the "Virgin Mother."

It must be granted that we are strictly impartial.

Is it then only a similar replunging of conscious thought into the distant abysses of prenatal life? For the careful study of mysticism establishes clearly that consciousness exists undimmed in this gigantic ascent backwards up the ladder of the past, compared to which Wells' "Time Machine" is mere child's play; and M. F. Morel comes back to it on several occasions:

"In the most complete introversion (that of Denis the Areopagite) there is no loss of consciousness, but a displacement of attention. Ecstatic experiences remain deeply engraven upon those who experience them, and this would not be the case if they were simply empty or void of meaning. . . . Consciousness is in fact something intensely mobile. When the exterior world has dis-

appeared, the circle of consciousness contracts and seems to withdraw entirely into some unknown and ignored cortical centre. Consciousness seems to gather itself together to confine itself within some unknown psychic pineal gland and to withdraw into a kind of centre wherein all organic functions and all psychic forces meet, and there it enjoys Unity . . . nothing else."

"Nothing else?"—What more do you want? There, according to your own admission, you have an instrument for penetrating to the depths of functional consciousness, of subliminal life—and yet you do not use it in order to complete your knowledge of the whole activity of the mind. You, doctors of the Unconscious, instead of making yourselves citizens of this boundless empire and possessing yourselves of it, do you ever enter it except as foreigners, imbued with the preconceived idea of the superiority of your own country and incapable of ridding yourselves of the need, which itself deforms your vision, of reducing whatever you catch a glimpse of in this unknown world to the measure of the one already familiar to you?

Think of the extraordinary interest of these striking descriptions—a succession of Indian, Alexandrine and Christian mystics of all sects without mutual knowledge of each other have all with the same lucidity gone through the same experiences—the triple movement of thought,<sup>1</sup> and especially the "circular movement," which they have tested thoroughly, and "which represents exactly the psychic movement of pure and simple introversion, withdrawing itself from the periphery and collecting itself towards the centre"—the mighty Stygian river that goes seven times round the Being, the round dance with its powerful attraction towards the centre, the centripetal force of the inner

<sup>1</sup> The three movements: "circular" when the thought turns entirely towards itself; "spiral" when it reflects and reasons in a discursive fashion; and "in a straight line" when it is directed towards the exterior.

soul corresponding to that exercised in the exterior universe by universal gravitation! Is it a slight thing by means of direct inner perception to be able to realise the great cosmic laws and the forces that govern the universe controlled by our senses?

If a scientist maintains that such a knowledge of psychic profundities teaches us nothing about exterior realities, he is really, though perhaps unwittingly, obeying a prejudice of proud incomprehension as one-eyed as that of religious spiritualists who set up an insurmountable barrier between spirit and matter. What is the "function of the real" of which scientific psychology claims to be the standard-bearer? And what is the "real?" Is it what can be observed by extrospection or by introspection like that of the St. John in Raphael's *Discussion*<sup>2</sup> who gazes into the depths with his closed eyes? Is it "the movement in a straight line" or "in spirals" or "in a circle?" There are not two realities. That which exists in one exists equally in the other. The laws of the inner psychic substance are of necessity themselves those of outside reality. And if you succeed in reading one properly, the chances are that you will find the confirmation and if not, the presentiment of what you have read or will read in the other. Laotse's deep thought that "a wheel is made up of thirty perceptible spokes, but it is because the central non-perceptible void of the nave that it turns," leads me to think of the latest hypotheses of astronomical science, which claim to have discovered gulfs of cosmic emptiness to be the homes of the various universes. . . . Do you suppose that Laotse would ever have been able to imagine such a thought if it had not secretly contained the form of the universal cosmic substance and its forgotten laws? Hypothesis do you say? Neither more nor less so than your most

firmly established and fruitful scientific hypotheses—and quite logically probable: for it satisfies the strict economy of the laws of the universe and partakes of their natural harmony.

But if this is true, the judicious use of deep introversion opens to the scientist unexplored resources: for it constitutes a new method of experiment having the advantage that the observer identifies himself with the object observed.

The clear intuition of Plotinus, who united in himself the spirit of Greek observation and Eastern introspection has thus described the operation:

"It may happen that the soul possesses a thing without being aware of it; it therefore possesses it better than if it were aware of it; in fact when it is aware of it, it possesses it as a thing that is alien to it, when on the contrary it is not aware of it, it is a real possession."

And that is exactly the idea that one of the greatest thinkers of modern India, Aurobindo Ghose, is trying to incorporate in science: he wishes to re-integrate generative intuition in its legitimate place as advance guard of the army of the spirit marching forward to the scientific conquest of the universe.

But if this great effort is rejected with the disdainful gesture of the exclusive rationalists, and particularly of psychopathologists, who throw discredit on "the standard of intellectual satisfaction" or, as the great Freud said with austere scorn on "the principle of pleasure", which in his eyes is that of "the unsuitable", those who reject it are far less the servants of the "real", as they imagine themselves to be, than of a proud and Puritanical faith, whose prejudices they no longer see because those prejudices have become second nature. There is no normal reason why, on the plausible hypothesis of a unity of substance and cosmic laws, the conquest, the full perception, and the "*fruitio*" by the mind of the logical ordering of the universe should not be accompanied by a feeling of sovereign well-being. And

<sup>2</sup> An allusion to Raphael's fresco in the Vatican, known as *Discussion of the Holy Sacrament*.

it would be strange if mental joy were a sign of error. The mistrust shown by some masters of psycho-analysis for the free natural play of the mind, rejoicing in its own possession—the stigma they imprint upon it of “narcissism” and “auterotism”—betray all-unconsciously a kind of perverted asceticism and religious renunciation.

They are, it is true, not wrong to denounce the dangers of introversion, and in so doing no one will contradict them. But every experiment has its own dangers for the mind. Sense and reason itself are dangerous instruments and have to be constantly supervised; and no close scientific observation is carried out on a *tabula rasa*. Whatever it is doing, the eye interprets before it has seen; and in the case of P. Lowell, the astronomer, he has never ceased to see upon the surface of Mars the canals his own eyes have put there. . . . By all means let us continue to doubt, even after having proof! My attitude is always one of profound Doubt, which is to be kept hidden in my cave like a strong, bitter but health-giving tonic, for the use of the strong.

But in the world of the “real”—that is to say, of the “relative”—where we must needs labour and build our dwellings, I maintain that the principle whereby we ought to attempt to satisfy the operations of the mind, is that of proportion, of equilibrium, between the diverse forces of the mind. All tendency to exclusiveness is dangerous and defective. Man has different and com-

plementary means of knowledge at his disposal. Even if it is of use to divide them in order to probe with them into the depths of an object of study, synthesis must always be re-established afterwards. Strong personalities accomplish this by instinct. A great “introvert” will know at the same time how to be a great “extrovert”. Here the example of Vivekananda seems to me to be conclusive. Interiorisation has never led in principle to diminution of action. Arguments drawn from the supposed social passivity of mystic India are entirely erroneous: here what is nothing but *Ersatz* is taken for the cause. The physical and moral devitalisation of India during several centuries is due to quite different factors of climate and social economy. But we shall see with our own eyes that her interiorisation, where the fires of her threatened life have taken refuge, is the principle of her national resurrection. And it will shortly appear what a brazier of action is this Atman, over which she has brooded for several thousand years. I advise the “extrovert” peoples of the West to re-discover in the depths of themselves the same sources of active and creative “introversion”. If they fail, there is not much hope for the future. Their gigantic technical knowledge, far from being a source of protection, will bring about their annihilation.

But I am not anxious. The same sources sleep in the depths of the soul of the West. At the last hour but one they will spring up anew.

## APPRECIATIONS

### THE MYSTICISM OF MODERN INDIA

By M. GROBETY

India is the land of infinite adorations, of powerful ecstasies, of myths, and of thousands of gods eternally revived. She is a jungle of the soul on which hovers the obsession of the Invisible and through which runs the ardent

inquietude of the Absolute. She exists only for the Spirit, and we cannot understand her so long as we have not contemplated the spiritual current of life to its backwater. Now this is not an easy thing; not that India hides her soul; rather the contrary; but the sources of information are wanting to a French student. Without doubt what we know of a Gandhi and of his practical

and social mysticism, well permits us to perceive something of the religious inspiration which is, down there, at the origin of all action, and the lyrical idealism of a Tagore appears to us also quite impregnated with spiritual fervour. But we know ill the fire itself, the warmth and glare of which reach us.

We are grateful to M. Romain Rolland who has just given us two books. Thanks to these we can enter into direct contact with "the mysticism and action of living India." These are the biographies, with materials admirably collected and based on a very complete information, of Ramakrishna and his genial and fiery disciple Vivekananda. Gradually, as the reader turns the pages, he feels the wonder of discovery.

Discovery, at first, of psychological order. What revelation, in effect, for us are these ecstasies of Ramakrishna! These are described to us according to the documents with such clearness, with such life that we seem to see them with the inward eye. And the author conceals nothing in these descriptions, that runs the risk of shocking our sense of proportion, so that we incline at times towards some defiance in presence of facts which appear to belong to pathology rather than to healthy mysticism. Little by little, however, we penetrate into intimacy with this Hindu soul, thirsting to embrace the object of its faith, the soul that drags along the body, right up to killing it, in its passionate flight towards the Absolute. We thus learn to know these believers who are also seers and who cannot remain content before having proved the direct presence of the Divine. And the first impression of astonishment passed, how very touching these open perspectives of the ignored provinces of the soul appear to us!

These mystics, whom ecstasy raises to the highest spheres of contemplation, nevertheless, are not some distracted dreamers, deprived of contact with the realities of the earth. Quite the con-

trary; because God, whom they have seen in their supreme visions, they find again in all life. Ramakrishna said: "The living being is God," expressing thus one of the profound thoughts of India—her magnificent obsession of unity. And from this thought, in view of the sufferings of his divine brothers, he deduced the ideal of the highest service: "Who may talk of showing pity to man? Not pity, but to serve him, to serve him regarding him as God." This ideal he made to burn in the heart of his disciples and, the most genial among them, Vivekananda, proclaimed in the face of the immense poverty of India, the social cult of "Beggar-God." "The only God who exists," he wrote, "the only God in whom I believe: my God the miserable, my God the poor of all races! . . ."

Let us not believe, however, that this fervour of pity, which knew to realise itself in touching acts, absorbed all the religion of Ramakrishna and his disciples. Because the service of man is nothing for them if it does not lead man to God. The total destiny of man, in effect, is only to be consumed in union with the Absolute. But as this Absolute is unique, whereas human religions are many, is not the effort of the seers of truth to embrace in one self-same love all the believers, to make ardent synthesis of all hopes, of all sacred aspirations of the universal soul? It is in this affirmation that the mystic message of Ramakrishna culminates, and Vivekananda, translating the thought of his master, wrote: "I accept all the religions of the past, and I adore God with all. I leave my heart open to all those of the future. Eccelecticism? No, but generous and powerful vision of the spiritual unity of humanity." When Vivekananda proclaimed this ideal to the Parliament of Religions at Chicago, in 1893, the effect of his words was immense, because then gleamed a certitude great as a revelation.

I shall not undertake to discuss this

thought, no more than any one of many such thoughts, which, in course of these volumes, rouse attention, surprise or admiration of the reader. I have only endeavoured to call up—and I have only imperfectly succeeded in it—some traits, among the most marked, of the vast and striking picture traced by M. Romain Rolland of the prodigious spiritual efflorescence blooming around and on the traces of Ramakrishna. This efflorescence is luxuriant as the vegetation of Bengal, and the author making a way described the approaches of the route, making one page of the religious history of modern India live again for us. This calling up of a history so near us in time, so attractive, so swollen with spirituality, which we, however, knew so little, is not one of the least attractions of his work.

All this offers an abundant material for reflection. Our Occidental thought, the spiritual climate of which is so different from the one where shine forth the passionate realisations and the daring of the mystic Hindu, may only widen and enrich itself in intercourse with the burning souls of the Orient even as the Orient enriches itself in contact with the intelligence of the Occident. "Asia," writes M. Romain Rolland, "works for us. We work for her. We are, she and we, the two halves of the soul." And it is true that in knowing her better intimately, we feel growing in us the sense of total humanity.

### THE SPIRITUAL GUIDES OF THE NATIONAL HINDU AWAKENING

BY JEAN DUBLIN

Since some decades, but above all since the end of the world war, a formidable revolution, one of the greatest, as much by its amplitude as by its innumerable consequences, is on the way of realisation. India, the great India, which Europe was pleased to believe asleep in a time-honoured passivity, is awakened. And here to-day she stands erect, menacing, in the

face of the imperialist nation which enslaved her, and claims her rights, her independence, her liberty.

During the last few years, hundreds of articles have been written on the Hindu national awakening and on one of the principal actual chiefs—Mahatma Gandhi. Political and economic articles succeeded one another, which endeavoured to show us the factors which determine the Hindu independence movement. But all that has always been a little like seeking to give to the French or the Russian revolution the purely economic and political causes forgetting that the two greatest revolutions of the modern world had had—before these were accomplished—some thinkers, who had forged their frameworks.

The great Hindu revolution which is being prepared, will be accomplished and will be likely to live because from to-day it has at its base some powerful formidable brains united to a living faith, who have traced out for it its path. In order to comprehend in all its amplitude what passes to-day in the immense world which Europe totally ignores, it is not only the admirable chief, Gandhi, whom it is necessary to know, but also the spiritual guides of modern India—Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. These are the two legendary and admirable lives which Romain Rolland has just published: *The Life of Ramakrishna*, and *The Life of Vivekananda*, which it is necessary to read and re-read. To our proud and haughty Occident which has not yet understood how very ephemeral, sterile and fragile its power is, to the senseless Occident which will next day remain astounded before the explosion which is being prepared in the yellow continent, the great writer and thinker Romain Rolland has rendered a valuable service by revealing before it the agitating forces of living India. Romain Rolland alone, who has consecrated his life to drawing men closer, who has used all his power to reconcile "the two great brother enemies of Occident," France and

Germany, might be charged with this mission, vast as the world, of throwing a bridge between the Orient and the Occident.

In reading *The Life of Ramakrishna* where the legend mixes with the real, the divine with the terrestrial, where the miracle grows daily, the mind asks itself: is it a man or is it a god? It is a man, it is a commanding soul, as Europe formerly produced and has no more been able to produce since she has established the divorce between reason and faith, since reason has killed faith in some, and since faith has stifled reason in others.

To sum up a life so full and so rich in a few lines is a thing impossible. The book begins with "the voice of the legend." "At Kamarpukur, one of the conical villages of Bengal, set in the midst of palm trees, pools and rice fields, lived an orthodox Brahmin couple, called Chattopadhyaya." . . . The wife Chandramani, on her solitary bed, dreamt of a god who embraced her.—And thus was born on the 18th February, 1836, the little Gadadhar ("the gay name with the tripping cadences of a bell") and whom the world knew later under the name of Ramakrishna.

Already at six his vocation was revealed to himself. For the first time he was carried off in ecstasy. Since then the ecstasies multiplied to the fear of his parents; and at twenty he was made priest of *Kali*, the Divine Mother.

Then the route spread out long and terrible, a veritable route which goes up in zigzags. Miseries, sufferings, despondencies, internal struggles, defeats and victories. Two "masters of knowledge," a Brahmin lady and Totapuri, "the man quite naked," helped him to vanquish his sufferings and put him on the way towards the Absolute. Little by little he arrived at the plenitude of his forces and of his powers. He entered into contact with the cultivated bourgeoisie of his country, "pioneer of progress," groups of disciples, and founded a sect: "We have

to build on other foundations than (those of) the founders of religions," said he. "We have to live an internal life so intense that it may become a Being. The Being will give birth to innumerable torches of truth."

It is this nucleus of men who came to constitute one day the famous Ramakrishna Mission.

After the death of Ramakrishna, it was his beloved disciple Naren, who was called Vivekananda, who succeeded the Master. "He was," says Romain Rolland, "physically and morally the absolute antithesis of Ramakrishna." The latter had passed his life at the feet or in the arms of the Divine Beloved, the Mother, and he died burnt by the ecstasies.

Vivekananda, of whom Ramakrishna had said "that he would shake the world," was "energy made man" which he preached to men. Energy is the basis of all virtues.

"His athletic appearance was opposed to the tender body, so frail, of Ramakrishna. He was tall, of square shoulders, of large chest, corpulent and heavy, with muscular arms exercised in all sports. . . ."

He was of a great aristocratic family and was born on the 12th January, 1863, at Calcutta. "His infancy and his adolescence were those of a young prince artist of the Renaissance." He had passionate love for the French revolution and for Napoleon and lived "in a whirlwind of spirit." It was only necessary that after a series of struggles and disheartening crises he should meet the master who had to fix his life. How to analyse here his tumultuous life, his passionate wanderings through India, his thirst for the spiritual unity of India, of the unity of Asia? He was truly the great pilgrim of India whom he always dreamt of saving from the ruin which awaited her. The whole world has need of India! So when in the autumn of 1892, he intended to speak at the Parliament of Religions which was going to hold its sessions at



Chicago, he embarked for America. He knew nothing, neither the exact date nor the conditions of admission. Those whom he asked for letters of introduction, wrote at the same time to their compatriots of their suspicion about him.

Vivekananda traversed China, Japan, and all that he saw came to settle his conviction in the spiritual unity of Asia. At last he arrived at Chicago. After a series of adventures he could at last be present at the sittings of the Parliament. His discourse "was a jet of flames." "It set fire to the souls of the crowd which listened." To the poor representatives of their sects who talked of their God, he had shown a task grander and more humane. "It was the breath of Ramakrishna who, through the mouth of his great disciple, made the limits to fall."

After a sojourn in America and in Europe, Vivekananda re-entered India

at last, where his success at Chicago had evoked an explosion of joy and of national pride. Immediately he founded the Ramakrishna Mission.

Since then Vivekananda never ceased to incarnate the great soul of India which he was in quest of. His action aimed without cessation at unity : at the unity of thoughts as at that of action. He had, says Romain Rolland, the genius of luminous words, of thundering sentences which gushed out from the forge of the soul and pierced through the millions of men. No one in India has produced a commotion similar to that produced by the famous phrase : "The only God who exists, the only God whom I believe in . . . my God the miserable, my God the poor of all races !" One may say that the destiny of India has been changed by it.

Three years after the death of Vivekananda, in 1905, the first explosion was produced.

## VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN GREAT BRITAIN, U. S. A., JAPAN, ITALY AND U. S. S. R.

BY SHIV CHANDRA DATTA, M.A., B.L., F.R. ECON. S.

### GREAT BRITAIN

Prof. Sarkar's impressions about technical education in Great Britain (visited in 1914) are the following :<sup>1</sup>

1. Technical education is not imparted in the conservative institutions like the Oxford and Cambridge Universities. Some of the biggest centres of technical education in Great Britain visited by Prof. Sarkar are the Royal Technical College at Glasgow, the Heriott Watt College at Edinburgh, the technical departments of the Leeds and the Glasgow Universities, etc. The Glasgow College teaches about 6000 students, the subjects taught being boat-building, ship-building, mining, engineering,

printing, electrical and mechanical engineering, chemistry, etc. The technical department of the University at Glasgow does not teach as many subjects as the Technical College. The teaching in the University is also more theoretical than practical. The Technical College is not in any way connected with the Glasgow University. Leading industrialists and merchants participate in the management of the former. That is beneficial in three ways : (a) the College can be made to promptly adapt itself to the latest contemporary changes in the economic and industrial world ; (b) the students are easily provided for ; and (c) the business leaders can manufacture their hands according to their needs and liking.

There are three other technical colleges in Scotland,—in Edinburgh, Aberdeen

<sup>1</sup> Vide *Vartaman Jagat*, Vol. II, pp. 335, 431-436, 452-456, 458, 485-489, 504, 518-521, 532-536, 579, 581.

and Dundee. The Edinburgh College (known as the Heriott Watt College) is the biggest of the three. It had about 2500 students on its rolls when it was visited by Prof. Sarkar. Of those students only 250 used to attend during the day, and the rest would earn their bread during the day and attend the College at night.

The Leeds University is another great centre of technical education. It specializes in the teaching of weaving, tanning and chemistry. The standard of teaching is spoken of as of a very high order. Prof. Sarkar thinks that in this University there is much greater intimacy and co-operation between professors than in conservative institutions like the Oxford and Cambridge Universities.

In a grammar school in Leeds he found even students of tender age (12, 13 or 14) manufacturing toy machines and tools. This habit is extolled as developing engineering aptitude from early boyhood. Previously language, literature and mathematics alone used to be taught in that school. At the time of his visit the school had adapted itself to the new orientations in the economic world and had begun to impart scientific and technical education as well.

2. Scotland is divided into three agricultural zones with centres at Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen. In each of these centres is a well-equipped Government Agricultural College. Professors of these Colleges carry on experiments in the lands attached to the Colleges and they also hold demonstrations in the numerous experimental farms scattered throughout Scotland.

Agriculture is also taught in the Edinburgh University. A certain measure of co-operation prevails between the Government Agricultural College in Edinburgh and the Agricultural Department of the University. Each allows the students and teachers of the other to use its laboratories.

The Oxford and Cambridge Universities, and some schools also, offer courses in agriculture. The arrangements for agricultural education in the Cambridge University are very elaborate. The University has big laboratories, both within and outside the town, for the carrying on of researches in animal breeding and diseases of animals, and also in cultivation proper, dairy-farming, etc. The research scholars are helped with Government and University scholarships. The results of the researches are communicated free to the cultivators. Sometimes large numbers of peasants are assembled from all over England in order to instruct them in the latest developments in the science and art of agriculture. The carrying on of researches by the University is justified on the ground that the cultivators, who are anxious for the maintenance of themselves and their families, are not in a position to apply themselves to research-work with uninterrupted and unstinted devotion.

3. Museums and laboratories of various types are attached to most of the educational institutions in Great Britain. All of them may not be big or richly equipped, but they serve the purposes of imparting instructions and acting as aids to experimentation quite well.

4. Owing to the very big and numerous donations and endowments made by rich Scotsmen and the enormous expenditure by the Government, both higher and lower education (whether literary or technical) has been very much facilitated in Scotland. And, in the whole of Scotland, Edinburgh occupies a position of unique pre-eminence in respect of education. Prof. Sarkar doubts whether he would find better facilities for education in any other town in the world than in Edinburgh.

We would now present some statistics about technical education in Great Britain (vide *Comparative Pedagogics*, pp. 54-55) :

IN ENGLAND AND WALES :		Scholars.
44 Larger Technical Institutes (advanced)	...	4,074
95 Day Technical Institutes (full-time)	...	9,228
(part-time)	...	8,691
Total		16,988

Besides, there are other technical schools in England and Wales :

4,147 Schools (part-time technical)	...	680,943 students
38 Day Continuation Schools	...	...
89 Junior Technical Schools	...	11,954 ,,
6 Nautical Schools	...	...
174 Schools of Art	...	47,663 ,,
110 Normal Schools	...	16,881 ,,
Total		774,429 students

Prof. Sarkar doubts whether the second category can at all be described as 'higher'.

#### IN SCOTLAND :

Central Institutions	...	Day Scholars	6,975
		Other	11,025
946 Continuation Classes	...		123,780
Total			142,680

The preponderance of part-time technical schools in England and of continuation classes in Scotland deserves to be specially noted.

#### U. S. A.

Prof. Sarkar makes the following observations<sup>2</sup> about facilities for vocational education in the U. S. A. :

1. The principal aim of the educational system seems to be to make the students practical and to fit them to earn their livelihood.

2. Numerous institutions exist solely for imparting professional education.

3. Even the ordinary institutions do not altogether neglect professional education.

4. There are numerous big institutions to impart free general and technical education (e.g., type-writing, chemistry, engineering, architecture, etc.) to poor men. These institutions are run either

by the Government or by social service organizations. Schools for poor men are mostly held at night.

5. Laboratories for technical and scientific education exist even in the pettiest institutions.

6. Advertisement and journalism are regarded as important subjects and elaborate arrangements exist for teaching these properly.

7. There is a girls' school in New York which teaches numerous arts and crafts (painting, embroidery, cooking, sculpture, etc.) to as many as 6000 students. The institution is the biggest of its kind in the U. S. A.—and probably in the whole world.

8. Special summer classes are held in the Columbia and the Harvard Universities to teach general and technical subjects to backward students and outsiders. Five or six thousand

<sup>2</sup> Vide *Vartaman Jagat* (Vol. on the U. S. A.), pp. 27, 41, 108, 114, and 765.

students attend in the summer classes of the former University and about 600 in those of the latter. Most of those attending in the summer classes of the latter are unmarried women, the majority of them being teachers. The educational

expenses of the teachers are paid for by the schools from which they come.

The figures relating to vocational institutions in the U. S. A. in 1924 (see *Comparative Pedagogics*, p. 43) are given below :

		Schools.	Scholars.
Normal Public	...	312	229,997
Normal Private	...	70	15,652
Theology	...	165	12,358
Law	...	124	35,732
Medicine	...	80	18,900
Dentistry	...	43	12,947
Pharmacy	...	63	9,951
Veterinary	...	12	511
Osteopathy	...	6	1,117
Private Commercial	...	739	186,368
Agriculture	...	68	189,168
Total	...	1,682	712,701

The total expenditure (Federal, State and Local) on vocational education in the U. S. A. in 1926 was 23,179,639. Out of this \$7,184,901 was contributed by the Federal Government. Of this sum again \$3,031,987 was contributed for agricultural training, \$3,056,148 for industrial training (including home economics and general continuation education) and \$1,096,765 for teachers' training.

#### JAPAN

Prof. Sarkar visited Japan during 1915-1916. The prominent vocational institutions visited by him in Japan are the following : The Imperial University in Tokyo, the Higher Technical School in Tokyo and the Agricultural University in Sapporo.

The prominent features of vocational education in Japan as noted by him are the following :<sup>3</sup>

1. Technical education in Japan is very wide-spread. Every university and college has arrangements for technical education. Besides, there are

numerous schools set up with the sole purpose of imparting technical education.

2. Japanese education owes more to Governmental than to private initiative. Private donations in the cause of education are negligible.

3. Young boys are taught to manufacture small machines and tools. Prof. Sarkar saw a large stock of electrical machines in the Technical School in Tokyo, which had been manufactured by little boys.

4. The Japanese engaged in the various higher professions (medical, commercial, legal or technical) earn high incomes. But the professors, even with the highest academic attainments, are satisfied with low salaries. Most of the hundred professors in the Higher Technical School at Tokyo do not get wages higher than Rs. 75 or Rs. 100, only a few up to Rs. 400 or Rs. 500, and none higher than that.

5. The Japanese professors are generally familiar with English, German and French. But they prefer to deliver their class lectures in Japanese. Students are encouraged to learn these foreign languages. Most of the best scientific

<sup>3</sup> *Vartaman Jagat*, Vol. on Japan, pp. 47-48, 181-184, 289-294.

and technical works in the world have been already translated in Japanese.

6. The best of the Japanese professors are in constant intellectual touch with the latest developments of their respective subjects in Eur-America.

7. The Japanese do not spend recklessly in buildings and equipment. The Higher Technical School in Toyko—a Government institution imparting training to as many as 1000 students, and teaching various subjects such as dyeing, weaving, electrical engineering, chemistry, porcelain-manufacture, architecture, etc.—was started with the initial outlay of only Rs. 15 lakhs.

8. The help of foreign experts was very much availed of at the outset. But at present most of the professors are Japanese. Only very few are foreigners. Even they have been imported to serve for definite terms, say, 2 or 3 years.

9. Physical exercise, economics, factory sanitation, etc., i.e., subjects other than those that are strictly necessary in a technical institution, are taught in the Technical School in Tokyo.

The importance of technical education for bringing about the economic development of a backward country is best illustrated in the case of the Island of Hokkaido in Japan. This island was a

barren and uninhabited island in the sixties and seventies of the last century, when the modernization of Japan was decided upon by the Japanese Emperor. The Governor who was sent to carry on the administration in that island temporarily went over to the U. S. A. in order to learn the art of colonization from the Americans who were at that time spreading out in the Middle, the West and the Far West of the U. S. A. While returning from the U. S. A. he brought with him a large number of foreign experts in various branches—all the experts belonging to various nationalities. On coming over to Hokkaido these experts started a school to impart training in mining, agriculture, house-building, animal-breeding, etc. By the time Prof. Sarkar visited Japan this school had grown into a huge university with as many as 900 students on its rolls and with many Japanese professors who had attained international reputation. It is the establishment of that school that has helped the exploitation of the agricultural and mineral resources of Hokkaido.

The number of technical institutions in Japan and of the students pursuing their studies therein, will appear from the following figures (*Comparative Pedagogics*, pp. 11-13):

#### I. Higher Vocational Institutions :

##### A. "Government Special Technical Schools" (students admitted after the secondary stage) :

		Institutions.	Scholars.
Agricultural	...	7	1,493
Commercial	...	7	3,342
Technical	...	15	4,836
Nautical	...	1	267
TOTAL		30	9,938

##### B. "Special Schools" (students admitted after the secondary stage) :

		Institutions.	Scholars.
Medicine and Pharmacy	...	4	1,554
Foreign languages	...	2	1,462
Fine Arts	...	1	670
Music	...	1	788
Other special schools	...	71	34,484
TOTAL		79	38,958

Prof. Sarkar doubts whether these "special schools" have the same academic standing as the 30 Government Special Technical Schools.

II. Intermediate Vocational Institutions (students admitted after the elementary stage) :

			Institutions.	Scholars.
Technical	...	...	100	21,295
Agricultural	...	...	326	51,050
Fisheries	...	...	12	1,129
Commercial	...	...	191	75,840
Nautical Schools of secondary grade	...	...	11	2,611
Industrial	...	...	78	15,606
TOTAL			718	167,531

III. Continuation Technical Schools :

		Institutions.	Scholars.
Technical	...	120	8,236
Agricultural	...	11,506	56,084 (161,421 women)
Fisheries	...	192	7,695
Commercial	...	420	28,750
Nautical	...	2	191
Other continuation	...	2,635	159,311
TOTAL		14,875	260,267

Students are admitted in the schools after they have completed the elementary stage. The schools are intended for those who are already in service.

ITALY

We would now give the figures relating to professional education in Italy (vide *Comparative Pedagogics*, (pp. 17-18) :

I. Higher Professional Institutions :

			Institutions.	Scholars.
Commerce	...	...	9	4,252
Agriculture	...	...	5	759
Engineering	...	...	8	5,809
Naval	...	...	2	516
Forestry	...	...	1	30
TOTAL			25	11,366

II. Other Higher Professional Institutions :

			Institutions.	Scholars.
Social Science	...	...	1	227
Oriental Languages	...	...	1	119
Veterinary	...	...	6	731
Women's Training College	...	...	6	907
Architecture	...	...	1	109
Industrial Chemistry	...	...	1	148
Economics and Commerce	...	...	1	117
Obstetrics	...	...	1	19
TOTAL			18	2,377

## III. Secondary Professional Institutions :

	Technical.		Institutions. Nautical.		Normal.			Scholars.
Government	... 111	+	17	+	91	=	219	61,560
Private	... 250	+	3	+	189	=	392	20,438
							611	81,998

## U. S. S. R.

The figures relating to professional education in the U. S. S. R. are as follows (*Comparative Pedagogics*, pp. 33-35) :

## I. Higher Professional Institutions :

		Institutions in 1924.	Institutions in 1924.	Scholars in 1924.
Medicine	...	24	2	26,078
Pedagogics	...	27	3	24,490
Agriculture	...	43	14	20,877
Technique	...	27	13	43,956
Industry and Economics	...	9	...	10,497
Music and Fine Arts	...	20	4	9,978
TOTAL	...	150	36	135,876

## II. Intermediate Professional Institutions :

		Institutions.	Scholars.
Medicine	...	66	11,064
Pedagogics	...	273	45,895
Agriculture	...	152	17,707
Technique and Transport	...	219	42,460
Industry and Economy	...	53	10,767
Arts and Music	...	92	19,664
TOTAL	...	855	147,557

## III. Lower Professional Institutions (1924) :

		Institutions.	Scholars.
Professional Schools	...	1,408	115,375
Apprentice Schools	...	719	54,720
Short Courses	...	595	41,473
Short Courses for Teachers	...	265	25,215
Music	...	114	14,466
Studies	...	85	3,753
TOTAL	...	3,186	255,072 <sup>1</sup>

COMPARATIVE EDUCATIONAL  
STATISTICS

We have till now confined our attention to what is called 'vocational' education in the narrow and popular

<sup>1</sup> The educational activities of the Vienna Chamber of Commerce show how great a part a Chamber of Commerce can play in the dissemination of vocational education. See Ch. 37 of the *Economic Development* describing the educational activities of that Chamber of Commerce.

sense of the term. But in the wider and more logical sense, every sort of education is more or less 'vocational.' As Prof. Sarkar remarks : "The training for priestcraft, medicine, law-politics, army, navy, theatre, school-teaching and so forth is no less a vocational or professional training than is that of the girl who seeks career as a maid-servant or the boy who wishes to start his life at the lowest rung in a coal mine. And of course, the educa-

tion that enables a man to be the head of a bank or the director of a chemical factory or the founder of an electrical engineering workshop is generally vocational or professional. Logically speaking, then, every school or college that exists anywhere on earth is a vocational or professional institution." (*Economic Development*, pp. 212-18). From this

standpoint, then, it would be interesting to enquire into the positions of the seven great countries with which we have been dealing, not only as regards professional education in the narrower sense, but also as regards general education, i.e., professional education in the wider sense. The answer would be provided by the following figures :

	Population.	Primary students.	Secondary students.	University students.	Professional and technical scholars.
Germany	... 63,118,782 (1925)	8,980,070 (1922)	751,442 (1922)	73,249 <sup>5</sup> (1925)	806,114 (1925)
France	... 40,743,851 (1926)	3,899,228 (1924-25)	174,489 (1924-25)	52,960 (1925)	...
Great Britain	... 43,783,032 (1925)	6,237,468 <sup>6</sup> (1924)	601,502 (1924)	54,210 (1926-27)	917,109
Japan	... 59,736,822 (1925)	9,020,619 (1922-23)	437,887 (1922-23)	35,163 (1922-23)	980,684 (1922-23)
U. S. A.	... 115,378,000 (1925)	22,372,075 (1924)	3,705,855 (1924)	664,266 (1924)	712,701 (1924)
Italy	... 40,548,683 (1926)	3,930,367 (1923)	158,055 (1922-23)	30,512 (1924-25)	75,786 (1924)
U. S. S. R.	... 139,753,900 (1925)	7,515,308 (1924)	719,296 (1924)	69,899 (1924)	538,505 (1924)

The figures given above do not include the kindergartens in France, Japan, Italy and Germany, the schools for the physically and mentally defectives in Russia (835<sup>7</sup> institutions with 350,000 scholars) and in Great Britain (627 institutions with 55,407 scholars) and also the workingmen's faculties (109 institutions with 45,702 students) and the Institutions of Political Education (55,286 in number; these include libraries, reading rooms, clubs, museums, etc., and also 14,881 Liquidation Centres for Illiteracy with 530,921 scholars).

If we compare the percentages of the population claimed by the primary, the secondary, the university and the professional students in each of the seven countries under consideration, we shall find out the respective positions of those

countries as regards primary, secondary, university and professional education.

The percentages have been worked out at pp. 96-97 of Prof. Sarkar's *Comparative Pedagogics*. By comparing these percentages we find that

I. As regards primary education the positions would be : 1. U.S.A. (19.3%). 2. Japan (16.7%). 3. Great Britain (14.3%). 4. Germany (14.1%). 5. Italy (9.67%). 6. France (9.5%). 7. Soviet Russia (5.3%).

II. As regards secondary education : 1. U.S.A. (3.2%). 2. Great Britain (1.3%). 3. Germany (1.1%). 4. Japan (.7%). 5. Soviet Russia (.5%). 6. France (.4%). 7. Italy (.35%).

III. As regards university education : 1. U.S.A. (.57%). 2. France (.13%). 3. Great Britain (.12%). 4. Germany (.11%). 5. Italy (.075%). 6. Japan (.058%). 7. Soviet Russia (.05%).

IV. And as regards professional education : 1. Great Britain (2%). 2. Japan (1.6%). 3. Germany (1.2%). 4. U.S.A. (.61%). 5. Soviet Russia

<sup>5</sup> These include 12,370 external students.

<sup>6</sup> Of the 200,000 teachers in Elementary Schools, three-fourths are women.

<sup>7</sup> This figure also includes the schools for the morally defectives.



(.38%). The percentages for France and Italy are not given.

#### EDUCATIONAL FINANCE

The educational development of a country, which is itself the foundation for its economic progress, depends financially speaking, on two factors :

First, the wealth of the country. "As long as a country is poor its educational institutions cannot prosper" and

Secondly, the percentage of public expenditure devoted to education.

	The percentage of public expenditure per year spent on education.	Public educational expenditure per head of total population per year.			Income per head of population per year.
		Rs.	A.	P.	
Germany	...	17	9	0	344
France	...	5	5	3	538
Great Britain	...	17	5	4	638
Japan	...	2	4	3	107
U. S. A.	...	29	6	4	845
Italy	...	4	0	0	255
U. S. S. R.	...	0	12	9	126

In France educational expenses "constitute the highest single item after finance, military and naval." In Japan educational expenditure is the highest item after finance, communications, army and navy. In Italy it comes immediately after finance and war. In

"Private contributions and endowments from the people are no doubt to be zealously solicited. But in any case they *would never suffice* to cope with the requirements. *Nowhere* do the educational institutions depend *exclusively* or *even mainly* on the donations and subscriptions of patriotic citizens." (*Comparative Pedagogics*, p. 105).

From the standpoint of educational finance the following figures<sup>a</sup> quoted from p. 97 of *Comparative Pedagogics*, would be found useful and instructive :

Great Britain educational expenditure is more than that on the army and comes immediately after the expenditures on the civil services, the post office and the navy. (*Comparative Pedagogics*, pp. 7, 13, 18 and 56).

## THE IMMANENT AND THE TRANSCENDENT

BY DR. MAHENDRANATH SIRCAR, M.A., PH.D.

Yajnavalkya has emphasised the immanence and the transcendence of Atman. Atman is in all things. It is out of everything. Such contrariety occurs in almost all places of the Upanishads. The Chhândogya says : "This Atman of mine within the heart is smaller than the grain of rice, or a barley-corn, or a mustard-seed, or a grain of millet, or the kernel of a grain of millet. The soul of mine within the heart is greater than the earth, greater than the atmosphere, greater than the

sky, greater than these worlds." Then again : "His greatness is of such extent; yet Purusha is greater still, all beings are one-fourth of him, three-fourths, the immortal in the sky." And again, empirical attributes are ascribed to the Absolute and also denied of it.

This apparent contrariety is necessary to indicate its true nature. The vision

<sup>a</sup> The separate figures relating to expenditure for vocational education (in the narrower sense) are not available.

of immanence has a deep meaning. It is helpful to the understanding of the permeation of Atman throughout the whole existence. It establishes the allness of Atman. It is in everything in its fullness, for it does not allow division in it. The intuition of transcendence is not possible at once. The world of appearance strikes our imagination as the reality scattered in space, and naturally the summary rejection of the appearance would perplex the native wit. A better and natural appeal lies through that which meets in us and out of us, for they carry to us intimations of reality. Yajnavalkya, therefore, seems anxious to point out the eternal presence of Atman in everything before he can teach its transcendence.

A direct appeal to transcendence might have suggested a form of dualism and a complete division between the world of appearance and reality. To avoid this he has an appeal to our ordinary experience to read the ultimate reality in everything. Thus in answer to Chakrayana, he said: "Brahman is your soul, and it is in all things." This was not clear to Chakrayana; he, therefore, again asked: "Which one, O Yajnavalkya, is in all things?" Yajnavalkya answered: "He who breathes in with your breathing, is the soul of yours, which is in all things." Proceeding further Yajnavalkya said: "He is in your soul, which is in all things." Again, in reply to Gargi, Yajnavalkya said that the ethereal expanse which supports the whole existence is supported in Brahman, the nameless, the formless, the measureless.

Transcendence in true sense of the term can be clear when nothing can remain outside its reference. The reference of all things to Self or Atman has an important significance for the aspirant to the highest realisation. This becomes apparent when an intellectual understanding is sought to be confirmed by the deeper illumination of the spirit. Spiritual illumination in immanent life has a significance which is not always clearly realised. It gives an elasticity

of being and allows the all-pervasive nature of Atman. This has a meaning for the seeker whose vision on the start is naturally narrow and confined. This indeed cannot be the final stage in realisation, for the finer the intuition grows, the more the perspective of truth changes. This growth of vision and the change of the truth-concept are actualities in the life of realisation. The mystic life, therefore, contains in itself infinite shades of realisations which are progressively true, though the truth of the higher planes may deny the lower forms of truth. The lower is necessary to lead to the higher and to prepare us for the reception of the higher presentation of reality; but when the higher is presented, the lower cannot retain its existence, for the higher and the lower are not two realities,—they are the presentation of the same reality in different forms. The reality is an undivided whole, and in its presentation it is always complete, though this completeness has not always the same kind of perception. And, therefore, in the gradual ascent of the soul the conception of Atman as the all-pervading reality has importance both intellectually as well as spiritually. This importance is not always recognised, and, therefore, the reference of the whole creation to Atman and the spiritual intuition of Atman seem to be a superfluity.

But this is not a superfluity. This is an important advance in the life of the seeker. The seeker realises the highest stretch of being in the expanded vision of supersensuous consciousness. But this supersensuous consciousness is still a play of consciousness in the relative order. Its perceptions are subtle. Its range is comprehensive. It is free from the limitations of finitude. It has an all-expansive radiation. It finds the entire existence brimming over with the one life. When the perceptions have grown so subtle, it becomes easier for the adept to overcome the limitations of this consciousness and be fully aware of the truth and value of transcendence.

The supra-mental sense reveals to us the Atman in the centre of existence as that in which moves the world of space and time, not as something different from it, but as its manifestation. The timeless Atman holds its eternal truth of being beyond this manifestation. The vision of a totality of existence is a vision that unfailingly meets the seeker on the path, and it is not often understood by those that see life through the limitations of the realistic logic. The mind trained in the realistic logic cannot appreciate the extreme mobility of spiritual consciousness and the different layers of our mental being. The supra-mental vision, therefore, overcomes the limitations of realistic bent and assent of the soul, and manifests the Atman as freed from the burden of sheaths and in its spontaneity as a free creative agent. Nay, the vision may proceed so far as to demonstrate the complete control of it over everything in existence including the cosmic creative agents, the shining forces of nature. Its existence is not confined to the world of manifestation. It bounds the earth, it embraces the heaven. The realistic mind cannot rise to the height of apprehending the reality beyond the sense of division, and therefore, the truth of the reality as presented in the Upanisads appear as a set of contradictions. With the active functioning of the supra-mental sense the wonders in intellectual and spiritual life begin to happen. That which appears as distant now appears as near, the small as great, the mortal as immortal.

The great advantage of this supra-mental functioning in man is that it opens an infinite sense of perception, and the world of knowledge remains no longer confined to the senses. This freedom from the senses at once reveals the range of perspective too wide to be fully grasped. The restrictions of space and time no longer hold. The external sense of space is displaced by its internal sense. In fact the division of inner and outer space gives way to the integral and undivided plenum of existence. The soul rises to the unbounded perception

of the totality of existence in the one single unit of eternal space. Nothing restricts its vision. This internal sense of space does not in any way establish its subjectivity. The subjectivity and the objectivity of space are distinctions true to the divided consciousness of the finite being and have no real meaning for the undivided and all-embracing perception of the supra-mental vision. To it the whole existence is an appearance in the spatial and the temporal orders and nothing can stand covered in yonder space and distant time. The supra-mental intuition is in a way, therefore, transcendent vision in the sense of a simultaneous perception of the whole existence. The mental vision of things takes place in the physical space. We may also call it the empirical space. The vision of space as a plenum of existence, undivided and integral, is not possible in the finite consciousness. It is possible in the supra-mental plane. Space-perception is here completely independent of the external reference and appears as a form of the super-mind. This perception is the true realisation of the ideality of space, and the intuition of the super-mind does not suffer the restrictions of the finite sense-perceptions. The supra-mental vision is necessarily the vision of the totality in the eternal complexity and diversity in the plane of physical expression, but in the finer planes of existence the supra-mental vision gives the clear sense of the move of self-expression in the subtle and the fine forms. Nay, in the supra-mental vision the perceptions are all simultaneous for they are focussed at the point of consciousness. The very ideality of space makes the perception of all things and beings possible. It also raises the conception of the Self from the figment of being to the all-pervasive transcendent being. And a new range of intuitions and freedom is the immediate experience. The supra-mental space-perception by presenting the integral experience at once elevates the conception of Atman. It gives the subtler conception of the Self as finer than space. It gives the

truth that Atman is the finest and the greatest of existence. The distinction of the experient and the experienced is not there. The whole existence is focussed in the dimensionless Atman. Strictly speaking, knowledge is possible there without the implication of a process. The Chhândogya feels it and says that the Brahma-loka always shines in its own splendour. The dualities of life and the logical intellect cannot obtain there, and, therefore, the text truly says that nothing of this side of existence can be there--this Brahma-loka cannot be infected either with pleasure or pain, merit or demerit, old age, birth or death.

But even in this height of existence there is a difference in intuition or super-conscious vision. The intuition at this stage is still all-pervasive. It reveals every point of existence. Though it does not suffer the limitations of the subject-object reference and their relation, still it is not freed from the content of the self,—the spatial and the temporal. The order is presented as a whole to the super-mind, and that in a way not involving the ordinary relativity of knowledge, for even at this height of intuition, the character of knowledge is changed from the outward reference to an inward vision. And this vision is, therefore, unique. It is self-expression in the ideal forms of space and time, and, therefore, the immediate intuition of the totality must be a form of knowledge different from the ordinary perception. The super-conscious perception attains the final stage when the reference to the ideal forms and contents is transcended in the spaceless Absolute. Here the supra-mental vision passes into transcendental intuition. The former has still the limitation of a reference to self-expression in the ideal forms of space and time, the latter has no such reference. This transition of knowledge from the all-inclusive experience to complete transcendence is well indicated by Yajñavalkya, when he passes from the positive qualification of Atman as all-knowing and all-seeing to its indication in negative terms. The final intuition

cannot in the least be described, for it is different not only from the ordinary perception, but also from the supra-mental perception. And, therefore, the real meaning of this height of existence is indicated by Silence.

The Absolute has no reference to a content, real or ideal, and the absolute intuition is, therefore, a form of knowledge quite unique, in so far as it transcends all reference to relativity of the mental or supra-mental vision. The supra-mental vision changes the conception of time from a series of succession to a continuous whole. The distinctions of the present, the past and the future do not obtain there, for the supra-mental vision allows no gap in the perception of time. The empiric time-sense cannot trace the continuity running through the past, the present and the future and thus reveal time in continuous succession. Time is, therefore, a bar to its restricted vision. The supra-mental vision gets over the realistic divisions of time into the past, the present and the future by an intuition native to it ; it rises to the understanding or the perception of time as an undivided continuity. The past is revealed with the present, and the present with the future. When such a consummation is reached, the empiric time sense to which the past is for ever passed and the future is secured for ever, is felt to be an illusion and a restriction of the realistic consciousness. The illusory division of time really makes its true understanding impossible for us, for whatever time may be, it glides on for ever. Our perception of time is, therefore, defective, and truly speaking, we do not perceive time, but infer its concept from the series of events in succession. The supra-mental vision of time reflects the present, the past and the future at the same moment. The distinctions are for ever removed. They are realised to be the accidental divisions of eternity and undividedness of time. This form of time has the virtue of presenting the events simultaneously before the super-conscious vision. The vision

presents the totality at a stretch, in fact the past and the future are lost in the ever-present. The past and the future are relative to the finite and empiric consciousness; in the supra-mental sense the empirical has no significance, and, therefore, there is no distinction between the past and the future.

Time in the sense of eternal duration is apprehended in a single act of intuition. The sense of division is not inherent in it and the flow of events appears uninterrupted and unbroken to it. The sense of division and multiplication of events is the perception of the surface mind. But this supra-mental perception of time is rare in the finite souls. It is impossible to them unless they can rear up in them the transcendental time sense. Even the saints and the sages who are credited with the capacity of the triple time sense, cannot claim this rare possession every moment in their life. In their psychical being they may feel occasional presentation of the cosmic events otherwise inaccessible, but they cannot claim that gift which can make them the constant percipient of the eternal duration. The sectional presentation of duration is all that is possible in the highly receptive souls. Even the creative and the preservative gods and the presiding deities have limited vision of time,—their time sense and vision may be more durable than that in the possession of man, still they have also the sectional presentation of time and beyond this they cannot command the perspective of eternal duration. Their time sense does not differ fundamentally from man's. Though their perception of time may be more extensive, fitted as they are with better and more powerful organs of perception, still they can hardly have the intuition of eternal duration. They are active in the causal order where the conception of time has been associated with the causal nexus. The causal order presents the functioning of events in the eternal loom of time, and naturally surface vision may identify time with

the succession of events. The eternal time sense cannot, therefore, be present to the intelligence accustomed to this habit of thought, and especially to those whose intellect sees only the sections and cross-sections of experience.

But in the intellectual intuition duration is presented in its unbroken continuity and is not limited by the sectional presentation of becoming. In this height of existence the vision of the becoming is integral and transcends the causal order of the creative and the preservative plane and the divisions natural to it. This intuition, therefore, differentiates this conscience of the totality of consciousness from that of the deities, nay, even from that of Isvara in his triple aspects of the creative, preservative and destructive being.

This intuitive vision of eternal duration is the vision of becoming in its even flow. But a state conceived previous to this is the state of suspended activity of the becoming. In the dance of life occasions arise when the flow of cosmic life is brought to a standstill before a new cycle of existence can emerge. Between the rise and fall of the cyclic orders becoming exists in a state of equilibrium. This equilibrium cannot be eternally stable as the forces gather up for the expression of life in a new order. But during the period of momentary suspension the sense of duration is also lost, for duration has a meaning only in reference to change. And strictly speaking, when becoming ceases to function concretely, it exists in an indefinite form and state. With the passing of becoming into the state of indefiniteness, the definite consciousness of duration ceases. Even the supra-mental vision is nothing indefinite, though its range of perception is wide and all-embracing. But the definiteness is relative to the modification of becoming; when the modification of becoming ceases, the supra-mental vision passes from the intuition of eternal duration to the intuition of the ever-presence. Space and time vanish here. This form of intuition reveals the indeterminate

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becoming. This is the non-relative experience of becoming, for becoming is strictly a functioning, and when its intuition becomes possible without its functioning, the character of intuition must be different. Be it noted that intuition as such does not differ and cannot differ, for it has the virtue of reflecting things everywhere; but the character of knowledge differs according to the nature of things it reflects. This is specially true of knowledge when it is confined to the relative plane of existence.

The world of space and time lulls into sleep and the supra-mental experiences with their infinite range of perspectives and sublimities pass into the Silence. The stirring of life with its infinite harmonies is hushed into the Calm. Life pushes out of the Calm, and after the dance in space and time, again falls off into the Calm. Calm encircles life. It encircles space and time. Eternally the process of a birth and a forgetting goes on surrounded by the perpetual calm. The moving universe and the endless void appear and disappear "in accord with the endless rhythm of the sleep and awakening of the eternal cause. That eternal exhales; worlds are born

and multiplied; inhales, matter returns to spirit."

This silence of the cosmic stirring is the withdrawal of the space-time-and-energy world into the basic principle. The relative order is completely removed from the scene and sleeps in the bosom of the Absolute. When the supra-mental vision is still active, it can enjoy the complete withdrawal of the life and the void into the eternal calm, for here the supra-mental vision is the final intuition and the greatest reality. It is the transcendental reality. The life of intuition is one continuous thread, be it in immanence or in transcendence; and its designation is relative to the objects it reveals. It is transcendental when it reveals nothing but itself, and in its functioning in the relative order it is better designated as vision, for here it cannot work by itself apart from fine mentality. The supra-mental vision, therefore, extends up to the transcendental perception of space and time and energy, for they require the activity of the higher mind. But when these ultimates of the relative existence vanish into the Silence, the supra-mental intuition passes into transcendental intuition. Intuition shines in itself, its true character is revealed.

## SWAMI BRAHMANANDA THE SPIRITUAL SON OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

By SWAMI SATPRAKASHANANDA

*(Continued from the the last issue)*

In explaining religion the Mahatma always appealed to reason. His interpretation of it was natural and based on reason. He invariably urged his hearers first to understand and then to accept. In one period of his life he went so far as to say that truth revealed to a mind which is laid open to it being uninfluenced by any religious belief or sentiment, carries with it a greater force of conviction than that perceived by one which starts with preconceived ideas. Though he himself did

not take active part in religious discussions, lectures and discourses, he attended them with interest and recommended them to those who had aptitude for them. Study and writing also received their due share of encouragement. But the greatest stress was always laid on individual spiritual practice, which being the most intimate form of *Sâdhanâ* was held by him as direct aid to Self-realisation. He repeatedly urged all who came to him for religion, to struggle heart and soul to realise the

truth for themselves and attain the peace and bliss eternal in this very life. He was never tired of reminding them of this supreme goal of human life. His daily conversations were full of exhortations for *Sâdhanâ*. Practice and realisation were the burden of his talks. We reproduce here one of his discourses delivered before the monks at Belur one morning in December, 1915 :

“ . . . There is God. There is religion. These are not mere words or moral conventions. He *does* exist. He can be seen. He can be realised. There is nothing more real than He. Fanaticism is not good. You have to be calm, sober and self-controlled.” (As he uttered these words, an electric current as it were passed through the audience.)

“You should practise meditation four times daily, in the early morning, in the forenoon after bath, in the evening and at midnight. You have left your hearth and home with a view to realise God. With single-minded devotion you should strive to attain to Him even at the cost of life. You should become mad-like for God-realisation. Simply to drag on an existence is a most miserable life. This way you will gain neither this nor that,—neither God nor the world. Both will be lost. If you cannot fix your mind on Him, practise hard. Do not give up practice, even if the mind does not like to dwell on Him. Read the *Gîtâ* at least one chapter everyday. I have seen myself that if I read the *Gîtâ*, when the mind is low, all the impurities are at once swept away.

“Everyday you will have to poke the mind. Why have I come here? How is the day spent? Do we really seek God? If so, what are we doing? Let us be sincere, let us say to ourselves with a clear conscience, whether we are faithful to the ideal, whether we are working in such a way as to reach the goal. The mind will try to deceive us. We must throttle it so that it may not play false. You should hold fast to truth. You must be pure. The purer you are, the greater will be the stead-

fastness of your mind. You will be able to detect and destroy the subtle tricks of the mind. Who are the foes? One's own senses. Only those are friends, which are in control. The more one can discover one's weaknesses by self-introspection and remove them, the more rapid will be one's progress in spiritual life.

“Practise hard. In the beginning the mind takes hold of gross objects. Through the practice of meditation and *japa* it learns to perceive the finer and subtler things. Winter is the proper season for practice. Now you are in the prime of life. Sit down saying like Buddha: ‘Let my body be withered on this seat. Let flesh, bone and skin be dissolved. My body will not move from this seat without attaining Illumination, which is difficult to attain even in many cycles of existence.’ See once for all if God really exists or not. A little of *titikshâ* (endurance), such as to live on one meal on the new-moon day or on the eleventh lunar day, is good. Give up all random talk and gossiping and think of Him constantly, whether you eat, sleep, bathe or rest,—at all times. If you do so, you will find that *Kundalini* is being awakened. There is nothing like constant remembrance of God. The veils of *Mâyâ* will fall off one by one. You will find what a wonderful treasure there lies within you. You will become self-effulgent.

“Days are passing. What are you doing? These days cannot be revoked. Pray to Sri Ramakrishna. He is still with us. If anyone prays to him sincerely, he shows the way. Do not forget him. If you do so, you will be ruined. ‘Thou art mine, I am thine,’—let this be your only thought. Having taken to this mode of life, if you do not practise meditation and *japa* and try hard to merge your mind in Him, you will suffer much,—your mind will hanker for lust and gold.”

With his childlike gaiety and transcendental spiritual attainments he possessed great practical wisdom. He

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had true business-like tactfulness. He directed the varied affairs of the vast organisation with rare intelligence, ability and foresight. His wise suggestions astonished the experienced workers of the field. In book-publication, in engineering, in financial and legal affairs he exhibited as keen an understanding and judgment as in religious matters. Some of his lay devotees holding distinguished positions in society did not unoften seek his advice even in matters relating to their profession or occupation. As the supreme head of a big organisation he had to face occasional disputes and controversies in which the contending parties seemed to have equal claim to truth and reason. Some of them proved momentous, but the Maharaj settled these invariably to the satisfaction of all. By a single stroke he could most ingeniously save the situation. Sometimes in settling an affair he would adopt the policy of 'wait and see' and let matters take their own course, though at times to the discontent of the persons concerned. But it was found more often than not that the course of events naturally took a favourable turn and the difficulties disappeared of themselves.

He was extremely strict in the management of public funds. He always insisted that any sum whatsoever received for a specified object should be scrupulously devoted to that particular purpose. Extreme care was taken in the keeping of accounts. The monks in charge of accounts were asked to deal with all in monetary affairs on strict business principles without any distinction.

He had a keen insight into the tendencies and capacities of men and never failed to choose the right man for the right place. He could therefore place full confidence in them and gave them complete freedom in their respective positions. He only helped them from behind. This naturally evoked their best energies and latent virtues. If they did any mistake he

would not chastise them openly, but gave them necessary instructions in private. His words not only gave them conviction but had an impelling force. He was their leader, friend and guide in one.

With his characteristic evenness of mind he maintained a balanced attitude in all things. He had no bias towards a particular course, thing or person. He possessed a wonderful sense of proportion. Reason, devotion and work found full play in his life. Though a constant supporter of meditation and contemplation as essentials to Self-realisation, he paid due attention to the performance of ceremonial worship, humanitarian deeds, and devotional singing. He recognised the necessity and value of all these according to men's temperaments, capacities and circumstances. The annual *pujās* and other ceremonials introduced into the central Monastery from the very beginning were strictly observed by him all along. Under his auspices the *Durgā Pujā*, the national festival of Bengal, was performed in image in distant Kankhal and Madras. The birthday celebrations of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and other prophets, such as Krishna, Buddha, Jesus and Sri Chaitanya, evoked the same zeal and devotion in him. He took great pains to see that all the rites connected with a religious function were strictly observed according to the rules laid down in the *Shāstras*. Without these forms and ceremonials religious life loses much of its sweetness, freshness and vivacity and spirituality is likely to turn into dry intellectualism.

In the service of humanity a greater stress was laid by him on the attitude of the worker than on the nature of the work or the mere performance of it. It is the spiritual outlook of the worker which turns the work into worship. So he wanted us to cultivate the true spirit of the servant of the Lord residing in all. As regards his own attitude to service, who can sound the depth of the feeling of one who dedicated his life and



all to the cause, who forsook his most favourite pursuit of solitary *Sādhanā* and the joy of *Samādhi* to be the sapper and miner of an institution which was to embody the twin ideals of renunciation and service in the world, who built it from the foundations to the present stage of development being at the helm of all affairs during the most critical period of its growth up to the last day of his life? Yet, he was so reticent about himself that it was hardly possible to get any clue to this main-spring of action. But the spirit sometimes asserted itself in spite of himself. Those who had the privilege of knowing him most intimately, will recall occasions on which he would be restless at the sight of the sufferings of others and would not be at peace until they were relieved of their misery. This wide sympathy, heartfelt compassion and intense feeling, nothing but the realisation of the Self in all can give. To attain the true spirit of *Sevā*, the development of one's spiritual nature is essentially necessary. He, therefore, urged us to make direct efforts to cultivate spirituality along with the philanthropic deeds. Mere work unaided by devotional practice, contemplation or reflection proves mechanical and has a tendency to make the mind outgoing. Again, one cannot resort to spiritual practice with profit, unless one has attained sufficient purity of mind. Only those whose minds are purified can undertake service to their own advantage as well as to the benefit of others. Simultaneous performance of *Sevā* and *Sādhanā* is what he as a general rule prescribed for the aspirant.

In an informal meeting of the inmates of the Math at Belur held in February, 1916, he spoke as follows on the value and necessity of work :

"I hear that some of you think that the activities of the Mission are only hindrances to spiritual culture, that one cannot make spiritual progress if one undertakes such work as famine relief and the like and that Swami Premānanda and myself do not prefer them.

These are all wrong notions. You have failed to comprehend our attitude. No doubt I repeatedly tell you and even now I emphasize that whatever work you have to do, be it famine relief or any other, you must contemplate on God, you must practise meditation, etc., in the morning and in the evening as well as at the end of the work. Of course, it is a different thing if you miss a day or two under the pressure of work. We heard Swamiji frequently say that we should work and worship, do work as well as meditate. Can anyone practise meditation day and night? Therefore one must do disinterested work. Otherwise one will be engrossed with vain and evil thoughts. Is it not then better to do good work? You will find that *Gītā* and all other *Shāstras* have strongly emphasized this truth. I also say so from my own experience. I have also worked hard for the Math. If you like, you may enquire of Sarat Maharaj and Baburam Maharaj. (*Both of them were present at the meeting.*) At the command of Swamiji, how many times I had to go to such obnoxious places as the attorney's office! Nowadays you get your train fare and food wherever you go. But then there was no certainty about food, drink and rest, still we had to work 'for the good of many, for the happiness of many'.

"Don't you see what a terrible war is raging before your eyes? They are laying down their lives, rich and poor, young and old, leaving behind their wives and all pleasures of life, for no higher cause than the saving of their respective countries, while you have surrendered your body and mind to Sri Ramakrishna abandoning your homes, friends and relations, etc., for a far superior object, i.e., the realisation of God and the good of humanity;—still you murmur against work! Swamiji used to say to us: 'Even if you think that this one life of yours is going to be spent in vain for the good of many, what does it matter? Who knows how many lives have been spent

in vain? Why fear if one life is spent in doing good to the world?' Indeed, there is nothing to fear. It is said in the *Shâstras* that work without attachment leads us to God. We find in the *Gîtâ*: 'Janaka and others attained to perfection simply by means of *Karma*.' Verily a man reaches the Supreme by doing work without attachment.

"Once Swamiji said to us: 'You see, the young boys of these days who will join the Math, will not be able to devote themselves to meditation and such other practices day and night, hence the necessity to start various forms of relief work.' If one can always engage oneself in prayer, meditation, study, etc., that is well and good; but that is not practically possible, so in the long run one becomes idle. Besides, you see, a good work must produce a good result. That itself will clear the path of your liberation. I have observed that those who have steadily performed meditation, study, etc., along with work adhering to a particular place, are soaring high like a rocket in the spiritual firmament.

"Have you not seen whenever a number of *Sâdhus* like you have undertaken a work with unity of purpose, with your hearts set on God, many great deeds have been performed by you and are still being performed? It is you who are showing to the world what great ends can be achieved even by a handful of men, if there is unity among them. You will reap the benefit of a lac of *japa* (repetition of God's name), if you can feed those who are dying of starvation. Only giving food will not do, you will have to teach them, you will have to educate them. You must know it full well that he who will shirk work, will deceive himself."

As to his love of music, we have seen how he participated in it in his early days. He was specially fond of devotional songs and recommended their singing and hearing as aids to spiritual practice. They give a zest to

austere spiritual life. They relax and soothe the nerves. Regular performances of chants in praise of Rama, Shiva and Kali introduced by him in the various institutions of the Ramakrishna Order, have been a special feature of this order of monks, and have maintained in it a pleasant atmosphere in spite of strenuous public activities and the responsibilities involved in them. The adoration of different gods and goddesses has considerably fostered its spirit of religious harmony, which the Maharaj like a true child of Sri Ramakrishna has always maintained in his life and deeds. Later in life he used to listen to sacred songs and hymns almost everyday sung by some one or other of the monks who generally attended on him. During his stay in different places musical soirees were sometimes arranged by the devotees for his pleasure, in which local experts in vocal and instrumental music considered it their blessed privilege to display their skill in his holy presence.

His aesthetic sense was really very highly developed. He was a man of refined taste. He could appreciate art and beauty in all forms. Persons with literary skill of no mean order sometimes came to him with their manuscripts and read out to him selected passages for his approval and valued suggestions for improvement. One of them, a Bengali playwright of considerable repute, thus testifies to the Maharaj's dramatic insight: "One day I received from the Maharaj one or two instructions relating to the essentials of dramatic composition and was astonished to find that he had mastered the dramatic art as well. I have gathered much valuable information from the best dramatists, but none of them explained to me in such few words the secrets of dramatic art."

Even in devising plans of building, his instructions were sought by many of the devotees. His daily habits and way of living also exhibited a fine taste and culture. In later life he lived in comparative comfort. His stalwart physical

frame, robust by nature, had grown so tender and susceptible that it could not bear any hardship, strain or irregularity. His nerves also had become too delicate and fine. His physique had to be looked after with utmost care. It seemed to have imbibed the fineness of his spiritual nature. The articles of his daily use were kept in their exact places and in perfect order. His clothings and all other things under his care always appeared fresh and tidy. It was happily expressed by one of Sri Ramakrishna's most intimate lay disciples that he would make brass look like gold. His majestic personality combined with his cultured style of living gave a royal air to his ways and movements.

He had a great liking for plants and trees. In whatever place he lived for a considerable time, it was his pastime to plant orchards, flower-beds, fruit and vegetable gardens. He took personal care of them. He enjoyed their growth and beauty as they existed in nature. He looked upon them as Nature's offering to the *Virât*. A flower blooming on the tree would give him more delight than one plucked and presented to him. He could not bear that the trees should be so shorn of their produce as to lose their natural charm, even for the sake of the *pujâ*. Once a monk at Belur was severely chastised by him for doing such violence to the trees while gathering flowers for the daily worship of Sri Ramakrishna. He could instinctively find out the peculiar needs of a tree or plant and devise the necessary nutriment. In this way he turned a dying plant into a luxuriant one with profuse flowers and fruits as the case might be. Sometimes by a special treatment he astonishingly improved the size, tint and odour of the products. He successfully transplanted some of the best plants from one part of India to another. Certain monasteries of the Order have thus come to possess more

or less exotic plants and trees.

The domestic animals of the monastery, such as cows and dogs, also received great care and attention from him. There was one pet cow at Belur which came at his call and received food from his hand. One of his favourite dogs is said to have expired out of grief for him when he left it behind at Belur on the occasion of his journey to Kankhal.

With all these virtues of head and heart he was remarkably unassuming and unassertive. A dignified reserve was an outstanding feature of his personality. He wore as it were the profound calmness of the sea. Just as the sea holds in its bosom the immense wealth of vegetation, living beings and precious pearls, and yet may appear grave and tranquil, so he looked serene and sober with all the hidden treasures of his mind and soul. But this reticence far from being the effect of self-conscious will was characterised by the natural simplicity and sweetness of self-forgetfulness. His personality was gentle but potent in its influence like the quiet power of Nature. Smoothly and silently she brings about each moment incalculable changes on the face of the universe. He, too, like a guiding power, unseen and unperceived, directed the course of each active organ of this mighty association. His sphere of influence was not confined within the monastic circle, but extended far beyond over the entire body of lay devotees, disciples, friends and admirers. Indeed, his personality was so impersonal that it could be rather felt than described. It worked upon the human soul through the silent forces of its blessedness and purity. His very presence was an inspiration. Those who had the privilege of being in his personal contact, knew full well, how unconsciously their minds were raised beyond the ordinary level,—a fact which they realised more and more deeply, the more they were away from him.

(Concluded)

# THE RELIGIOUS BASIS OF NATIONALITY

By ANANDA

A friend has requested us to explain the phrase "the religious basis of nationality". Again and again it is said that the foundation of the Indian nation is religion. Swami Vivekananda said : "I see that each nation, like each individual, has one theme in this life, which is its centre, the principal note, round which every other note comes to form the harmony. In one nation political power is its vitality as in England. Artistic life in another and so on. In India religious life forms the centre, the keynote of the whole music of national life, and if any nation attempts to throw off its national vitality, the direction which has become its own through the transmission of centuries—that nation dies, if it succeeds in the attempt. And therefore, if you succeed in the attempt to throw off religion and take up either politics or society or any other thing as your centre, as the vitality of your national life, the result will be that you will be extinct." The Swami was never tired of repeating this warning.

Two questions may arise in this connection. (1) What is meant here by religion? Is it any credal religion,—Hinduism, or Islam, or Christianity? (2) Or does religion mean only character—selflessness, fearlessness, courage, servicefulness and such other qualities? If so, does not every nation possess them, and is not every nation thus based on religion? What is exactly meant by "the religious basis of nationality"? We shall try very briefly to answer these questions in the following few lines.

It is our opinion that by "religion" is meant neither of the two positions mentioned above. It means neither credal religion nor merely character. What is religion? Man has in him a spiritual essence, called soul, *Atman*, which is eternal, deathless, all-joy, all-knowl-

edge and all-happiness. But man has forgotten it. He cannot perceive it. It is as it were lost to him. And he is behaving as one of exactly the opposite nature of the soul. He is mortal, unhappy, frail. Similarly there is in the heart of all things a reality we call God. Him also we have forgotten. Thus our relations with the world also are all erroneous and miserable. Religion is the recognition and ultimately the experience of the *Atman* and God in life and reality, and the consequent remoulding and conduct of life on the basis of that recognition. As it is we simply ignore the existence of soul and God, and we run after earthly things and glorify them and devote our life and energy to their acquisition. But when we recognise that we are really *Satchidânanda Atman* and that the world is really God, our outlook changes. We discipline our former tendencies. We move and live in such a way that our thoughts, feelings and activities may help us to realise our soul and God. Henceforth we judge everything by its capacity to help us in that realisation. We avoid those things that hinder us and cultivate those that help.

When we speak of the religious basis of nationality, we also mean the same thing. If a nation thinks that politics is the greatest thing, it devotes its all to its fulfilment. It trains itself and moulds its circumstances accordingly. When a nation considers society as the most important thing, its best energies are devoted to its reform and improvement and all other things it bends to its purpose. But if a nation thinks that religion—the realisation of God and soul—is the greatest thing, it devotes all its resources to that purpose. Its political, social and economic institutions are so constituted as to augment this central

purpose. It will try to remove all elements antagonistic to religion and cultivate those that help the growth of religion. And it will see that its activities lead directly or indirectly to the growth of the spirit of religion among the people. It is easy to understand that national institutions, social, political, economic, etc., if they are to be helpful to religion, have to be constituted differently from those that are meant to serve only the body and superficial mind of men. Certain institutions there are in every country. Every country has its politics, its society, its domestic customs, its economic system, its educational system, its religious creeds. India also has hers. These are all the outcome of collective living. But their spirit, form and purpose differ according to the outlooks of the nations. If a nation glorifies religion above all, it will mould its institutions in one way. If a nation seeks earthly glory above all, it will mould its institutions in another way. When we speak of the religious basis of nationality, we indicate this difference.

One important fact has to be noted carefully: Religion is the *conscious* recognition of the existence of God in life and activity. God shines ever in the religious outlook. This makes a real difference in life. One may be unselfish, generous, bold, fearless, charitable, etc. But the main point is what he is aiming at in life. These qualities are essential to religious life. But they in themselves do not constitute religion. We see again and again these qualities being devoted to nefarious purposes. When soldiers go to enslave other peoples, or when statesmen devote their all to the furtherance of the material interests of their country, they often exhibit excellent qualities. But their aim and purpose is wrong. They do not want God, they want other things. Here is the crucial difference. And that makes a tremendous difference in the direction and utilisation of national energies and consequently in the formation and guidance of national institutions. Religion takes the whole

man, spiritual, mental and physical, and recognises that the spiritual is the real man. All other outlooks assign the spiritual man a secondary or tertiary place.

When we ask that the Indian nation should be based on religion, what we mean is that India should *consciously and clearly* place before it the ideal of God-realisation. Every man, woman and child of India should instinctively feel and know that life's one real purpose is to realise God, that all activities, individual and collective, should be so conducted that they may serve the central purpose, and that nothing shall be thought, felt or done which may obstruct the spiritual purpose. When this purpose looms large before the nation, it will know easily how to conduct its secular activities. Secular activities there must be,—political, social, or economic. But unless we keep clear before our mind's eye the spiritual purpose, we shall not know how, to what extent and in what forms those activities should be conducted. So what is wanted is that the nation's spiritual purpose should be made strong above all. That is why Swamiji said: "Every improvement in India requires first of all an upheaval in religion. Before flooding India with socialistic or political ideas, first deluge the land with spiritual ideas." It is true that even in India all are not and cannot be truly spiritual at once. There will be always many who would be worldly-minded. But the nation as a whole must be religious. The spiritually endowed should be its leaders. The achievement of spirituality should be considered the highest and the one real aim of life and all should try to be spiritual as far as they can. There should also be daily *practices* by which people shall seek to be spiritual. Though religion in essence is one, its forms may be various. Let everyone practise religion in the form he likes best. But religion should be *practised*. Without that, it would but be a name, an empty thing. We shall not discuss here what consequences will follow from a serious practice of religion. If we make religion the

central purpose of life, everything else will be all right.

Those who have character, to whatever purpose they may devote it, are an asset to the country. Though they may not be religious, yet they have qualities of mind, which, when they would be devoted to religion, would achieve wonderful results. We would not have hesi-

tated to call them religious, had it not been that their aim makes a tremendous difference. Good qualities *can* be devoted to wrong purposes, as we have instanced above. And unless they are devoted to religion, they may be only—so far as the central purpose of the Indian nation is concerned—like gold hidden under earth.

## ASHTAVAKRA SAMHITA

By SWAMI NITYASWARUPANANDA

न हिंसा नैव कारुण्यं नौद्धत्यं न च दीनता ।

नाश्चर्यं नैव च क्षोभः क्षीणसंस्मरणेऽनरे ॥ १६ ॥

क्षीणसंस्मरणं One whose worldly life is exhausted अनरे one who is not man ( विदुषि in the wise one ) हिंसा desire to harm न not कारुण्यं mercy न not एव verily नौद्धत्यं insolence न not दीनता humility न not च and नाश्चर्यं wonder न not क्षोभः mental disturbance न not एव verily च and ( चक्षि is ).

16. In the wise one whose worldly<sup>1</sup> life is exhausted and who is no<sup>2</sup> longer a man, there is neither<sup>3</sup> any desire to harm nor mercy, neither insolence nor humility, neither wonder nor mental disturbance.

[<sup>1</sup> *Worldly etc.*—He is no longer bound by ignorance which causes the rounds of birth and death. He is illumined and has destroyed bondages of desire and *Karma*.

<sup>2</sup> *No etc.*—He has transcended the limitations of human nature. Though living in a human body, he is not strictly speaking human.

<sup>3</sup> *Neither etc.*—These opposites do not exist in him. He is above them.]

न मुक्तो विषयद्वेष्टा न वा विषयलोलुपः ।

असंसक्तमना नित्यं प्राप्ताप्राप्तमुपाश्रुते ॥ १७ ॥

मुक्तः 'The liberated one विषयद्वेष्टा abhorrent of the objects of the senses न not विषयलोलुपः craving for the objects of the senses न not वा or ( भवति is सः he ) नित्यं ever असंसक्तमनाः with a detached mind ( सन् being ) प्राप्ताप्राप्त' the attained and the unattained उपाश्रुते enjoys.

17. The liberated one neither<sup>1</sup> abhors the objects of the senses nor craves them. Ever with a detached mind he enjoys<sup>2</sup> the attained<sup>3</sup> as well as the unattained.

[<sup>1</sup> *Neither etc.*—Because abhorrence and craving are both due to attachment, from which a liberated soul is ever free.

<sup>2</sup> *Enjoys etc.*—Attachment is the source of enjoyment to ordinary people. They therefore enjoy a thing which actually comes into their possession. The liberated ones, however, ever free as they are from attachment, do not care for the attainment of the things of the world, and is ever happy even without anything.

<sup>3</sup> *Attained etc.*—They enjoy what things come to them without any effort on their

part. But they are not attached to them. And if certain things do not come into their possession, they do not mind. They are quite unaffected.]

**समाधानासमाधानहिताहितविकल्पनाः ।**

**शून्यचित्तो न जानाति कैवल्यमिव संस्थितः ॥ १८ ॥**

शून्यचित्तः One of vacant mind ( ज्ञानी sage ) समाधानासमाधानहिताहितविकल्पनाः the alternatives of contemplation and non-contemplation, good and evil न जानाति knows ( सः he ) कैवल्यम् the state of Absoluteness संस्थितः abiding इव as it were.

18. The sage of vacant<sup>1</sup> mind knows<sup>2</sup> not the conflict of contemplation and non-contemplation, good and evil. He abides<sup>3</sup> as it were in the state of Absoluteness.

[<sup>1</sup> Vacant—indifferent to the world. No desire or thought arises in his mind. It is filled with the consciousness of *Atman* alone.

<sup>2</sup> Knows etc.—Because all such conflicts arise only in connection with the relative life and world which he has transcended.

<sup>3</sup> Abides etc.—He lives in the same way as if he were in the state of absolute consciousness.]

**निर्ममो निरहङ्कारो न किञ्चिदिति निश्चितः ।**

**अन्तर्गलितसर्वाशः कुर्वन्नपि करोति न ॥ १९ ॥**

( ज्ञानी The man of Knowledge ) निर्ममः devoid of the feeling of 'mine-ness' निरहङ्कारः devoid of the feeling of 'I-ness' किञ्चित् anything न not ( अस्ति is ) इति this निश्चितः knowing for certain अन्तर्गलितसर्वाशः with all desires gone from within ( सन् being ) कुर्वन् doing अपि though न not करोति does.

19. Devoid of the feeling of 'mine-ness' and 'I-ness', knowing for certain that nothing is, and with all his desires set at rest within, the man of Knowledge does<sup>1</sup> not act though he may be acting.

[<sup>1</sup> Does etc.—Action, as we ordinarily understand it, presupposes the sense of egoism on the part of the doer. A man of Knowledge, however, transcends this sense of egoism. All his actions, therefore, though appearing as those of ordinary people, are not essentially on a par with them. His actions do not produce any results at all, while those of others entail new and fresh bondages on the agent.]

**मनःप्रकाशसम्भोहस्वप्नाद्यविवर्जितः ।**

**दशां कामपि संप्राप्तो भवेद्गलितमानसः ॥ २० ॥**

मनःप्रकाशसम्भोहस्वप्नाद्यविवर्जितः Free from the display of the mind, delusion, dream and dullness गलितमानसः with the mind melted away ( ज्ञानी sage ) काम् अपि indescribable दशां condition संप्राप्तः भवेत् attains.

20. An indescribable state is attained by the sage whose mind has melted away and who is free from the display of the mind, delusion, dream and dullness.

[A man of Self-knowledge has his mind completely purged of all delusion, inertia, etc., that obstruct the vision of the Reality. In such a state of the mind all its functions, *vrittis*, cease to operate and it is as good as destroyed. Then the final realisation bursts forth of which no description is ever possible.]

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

The present number is prefaced with *An Unpublished Letter of Swami Vivekananda*. . . This is followed by *Cyclic Rest and Change*, also by SWAMI VIVEKANANDA. It has not been hitherto published in *Prabuddha Bharata* or included in *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*. It was written by the Swami with his own hand during his first visit in America to answer questions put by a Western disciple. . . Swami Premananda whose talks we publish in *Discourses by Swami Premananda*, was one of the direct monastic disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. For a life-sketch of the Swami, see the October and November issues of *Prabuddha Bharata*, 1929. . . In *Mystic Introversion and Its Scientific Value for the Knowledge of the Real*, ROMAIN ROLLAND attacks one of the momentous problems of the day,—traducement of religion by psycho-analysis. We recommend this article to the very careful attention of our readers. . . *Appreciations* is made up of two of the many reviews which appeared in the French press on M. Rolland's original volumes on Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. These two reviews will show how the subjects of the books have been received in France. . . SHIV CHANDRA DATTA, M.A., B.L., F.R. ECON. S. contributes *Vocational Education in Great Britain, U. S. A., Japan, Italy and U. S. S. R.* to this issue. . . and DR. MAHENDRANATH SIRCAR, M.A., PH.D., *The Immanent and the Transcendent*. . . Swami Brahmananda the Spiritual Son of Sri Ramakrishna by SWAMI SATPRAKASHANANDA is concluded in this number. . . ANANDA contributes to this issue a short but timely article, *The Religious Basis of Nationality*. Ananda, as our readers may remember, contributed lately a series of articles on the Practice of Religion.

### KALI-WORSHIP AND VAMACHARA

The annual worship of Mother Kali fell this year on the 21st day of October. And all over Bengal the Divine Mother was worshipped with all the ecstacy of devotion and exaltation of spirit. The cult of Kali is the fruit of an extreme boldness in facing the naked truth. The truth is not all pleasant. The reality is not all sunshine. There are also evils and dark spots in it. If there is any symbol which most truly represents reality, it is the form of Kali. Expressive at once of the Absolute and the relative, of life and death, of good and evil, of strife and peace, this form, as we dwell on it in meditation, takes us into the very heart of the real.

The cult of *Shakti* has this advantage that it rejects no vision of reality. There are innumerable visions of it, according to the developments of individual minds. Necessarily *Shakti* has been conceived in various forms, gross and subtle. A pure, refined mind conceives Her in a pure and fine form. A gross mind, obsessed by the lure of sense-objects, conceives Her as presiding over the gross world of realities and associates gross rites with Her worship. An undiscriminating mind confuses these different visions. Not that such confusion is unnatural. Hinduism, with its wonderful catholicity, never antagonises any faith. This in a sense would have been dangerous, if there were not another principle operative in Hinduism, which constantly leads the votaries to higher and higher visions. Catholicity would make us welcome and stick to all forms, subtle and gross. But the uplifting principle would make us yearn for finer visions and take us beyond the gross forms. Whenever the national spirit has been dormant, the uplifting force has also slept and worship has been made gross and vitiated. This explains why in certain forms of wor-



union can be effected, and each of them is legitimate. But as it often happens with us humans, we forget the inner meaning and give ourselves over to the forms and consider *them* as worship. Thus performing certain rites, using certain articles,—flowers, fragrance, etc., making certain offerings, repeating certain words and formulas, practising certain postures of the body,—all these signify to many the essence of worship. These by themselves are not worship. This is not to say that those practices are of no consequence. Every action has its effect. These also have theirs. But they do not amount to what constitute the essence of worship.

Union with God presupposes the consciousness of God. God and man are not really separate entities. Whatever certain philosophies may say, unless there is a pre-existent unity, there cannot be any union between God and man. Man *is* God, only he is enshrouded by certain sheaths which have clouded his divine self. When these sheaths are worn out, the divine effulgence bursts forth, and man becomes God. In any case, man feels united with God and he does not know where he ends and where God begins,—the two become one. This is the culmination of worship. Whatever practice, thought or action helps in wearing and tearing the veils that hide the Divine self, is worship.

Having ascertained the essential nature of worship, we have to remember that man as he is at present, is a weak being, full of errors, short-sighted and often at the mercy of circumstances. He, therefore, cannot always determine what will help him in tearing his bondage. It is necessary, therefore, that he should have certain practices prescribed to him, which he may faithfully follow and which will by and by free him from the enveloping ignorance. In every religion there are such well-known methods. These methods have been tried by many *Sādhakas* and have been found quite reliable and efficacious. So for practi-

cal purposes, the practice of those methods can be called worship. Here, again, we should point out that an automatic practice is little helpful. Every practice must be made with sincerity and enthusiasm, and we must constantly watch if our practice is succeeding in lifting our consciousness above the normal level, freeing us from the bondage of desire and taking us nearer to the presence of God.

Feeling the presence of God may be differently conceived by different persons. A *Jnāni* will conceive it as the expansion of self, or rather as tearing the subjective bondages and realising the higher self. A *Bhakta* will consider it as a gracious visitation on the part of the Lord. But in all cases there must be an awareness of the Divine Substance. And this awareness must grow from day to day till only God remains and nothing else. The practice that helps this realisation is worship.

The answer to the second question is rather hard to give. For temperaments differ. Certain practices are most suitable to some, others to others. What is best for me, may be worst for others. Everyone must find the best form of worship for himself with the help of a true *Guru*. We shall here answer the question in a general way only. Considering the circumstances in which we are living nowadays, very few persons have leisure enough to devote themselves to strenuous *Sādhana*s. Their bodies also are not fit. We are speaking of the average person. *Bhakti* is best under the circumstances,—*Bhakti* in the spirit of a servant or child of God. Repeating the name of the Lord, meditating on Him, worshipping Him formally, visiting holy places and holy men—all these are helpful. But one should always think oneself as pure and perfect, same as *Satchidānanda*, for the child of God is of the same stuff as the Father Himself. We are sure, our correspondent will find a convincing reply to his question if he acquaints himself with the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. We

believe that mere spiritual practice will not be effective enough for the average man unless he undertakes works for the purification of his mind. There is nothing so effective as the unselfish service of others. That purifies the heart quickly, frees us from our gross desires and takes us nearer to God. *Bhakti* accompanied by service of men in the spirit of worship,—this, we think, is the best form of worship in the present age. But as we have pointed out, there must also be an element of *Jnāna* in it,—as when we consider ourselves as *Satchidānanda*. This is essential. We must not consider ourselves as miserable sinners, forever bound, helpless, ignorant and weak. We must look upon ourselves as free, illumined, perfect and blissful, of the same essence as God. That gives quick result.

### CLEMENCEAU ON INDIA

The following was kindly sent us by Sir John Woodroffe :

M. Clemenceau's interest in India is well-known. There is some mention of its philosophies and religions in his book *Au soir de la Pensée*. A shorter reference to the same subject occurs in "Le Silence de M. Clemenceau" by Jean Martet, his secretary. This is to be found at page 165, in the form of a conversation between M. Clemenceau (M.C.) and M. Martet (M).

M.C.

You must see India.

M.

It is so grimacing and distorted. (The previous reference had been to some other ancient civilizations with which it is thus compared.)

M.C.

We have not only to deal with grimaces. I have myself seen—I don't know where, but at Lahore, I think—a Buddha, the face of which was formed with merely two lines for the eyes, and one for the mouth. Disdain has never been better expressed. India is a country which is simply crammed with ideas (*gorgé d'idées*), and which has arrived at a kind of greatness which is equal to ours. One must not be too much of a Cartesian, for that means that you will understand nothing and like nothing in the world but yourself, and you will remain in your corner like a cripple who has lost both legs.

M.

Is it true that there is unrest among the Indians?

M.C.

Yes. The English will have difficulties there one of these days. It remains however to be seen whether the Hindus will be able to govern themselves. What can you expect of a people who look upon a widow as being lower than the meanest of servants? She is the slave of her mother-in-law. She is treated with contempt and in the end dies of it.\*

M.

And the Vedas? What have you to say of them?

M.C.

The Vedas are astounding (*épatant*). India can teach us more than one lesson.

M.

To me it is like being on another planet.

\*Of course this is all wrong.—Ed.

### REVIEW

INDIA: A NATION. By Annie Besant. Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. 226 pp. Price Re. 1/8/- (board), Rs. 2/- (cloth).

In this the author advocates India's fitness for Self-government with a deep knowledge

of Indian affairs and a sincere feeling for her sufferings under British rule. Mrs. Besant's services to India in the fields of religion and education and her active participation in India's political struggle have made her an able exponent of the national

feeling of India. The book appeared in print for the first time in 1915. The copy under review belongs to the fourth edition, which shows that the book is still in demand. Though there have been new developments in the political life of India during the last few years, the book has not lost its value as an instructive study of National India and as an effective interpretation of her national cause.

The first part of the book outlines the whole history of India from the ancient time to the modern age, clearly indicating how India maintained a healthy and prosperous national existence for thousands of years before the short span of British rule. Her national self-consciousness has been intact through the ages in spite of all vicissitudes. The second part investigates into the religious and the political movements of Modern India, her economic position and her educational system, and shows how India is groaning under the British domination. It is for the good of India and for the good of England that British Democracy should realise the gravity of the situation and accord India her rightful place in the Empire before it is too late.

The book is nicely printed and got up. A long appendix, an index and a bibliography have made it all the more useful.

**ON GENIUS.** By Swami Nirlepananda. Ramakrishna Math, Bankura. 22 pp. Price 3 as.

The booklet is a study of the problem of superman from the Eastern and the Western view-points. Many illustrations of the different types of genius have been given. The author seems to hold that genius is not the exclusive property of a particular class of men. A genius may be the special elect of the Providence, but the choice may fall on anyone, as each has within him the unlimited source of divine energy.

**THE GOLDEN VERSES OF THE PYTHAGOREANS** By the Editors of the Shrine of Wisdom. The Shrine of Wisdom, London. 26 pp. Price 2s. net.

The book is a metrical translation of the well-known verses, sometimes called "the Golden Verses," of Pythagoras. Though not composed by Pythagoras himself, they contain his ethical teachings in a nutshell. They were held in high regard by "the whole sacred body of the Pythagoreans." They

give the essential principles necessary for the regulation of physical, mental, moral and spiritual life. The book contains a short introduction and a full commentary by the translators. The printing and the get-up are quite decent.

**PAUL, HERALD AND WITNESS.** By A. C. Clayton. The Christian Literature Society for India, Madras. 369 pp. Price Re. 1.

This instructive account of the life and missionary activities of St. Paul is meant specially for the Christian preachers, teachers and students in India. The materials are drawn from many authentic sources. The book gives a clear view of the circumstances under which Paul preached the crucified Jewish Carpenter as the Saviour of the World. It also presents some of his valuable teachings embodied in his letters. A chronology of Paul's life, a glossary on important terms, a long index and five maps have been appended to the book. The printing is good.

**I. LECTURE NOTES.** By C. Jinarajadasa.  
**II. THEOSOPHY, PAST AND FUTURE.** Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. Price Re. 1/8 and Re. 1/- respectively.

**THE YOGA SUTRAS OF PATANJALI.** By M. N. Dvivedi. Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. Re. 1/-.

Contains the original sutras in Sanskrit, their English translation and a running commentary in English, together with introduction and appendix.

**CELESTIAL CORRESPONDENCE, VOL. II.** By Bharati Bhusan Prof. Prakasa Rao. Tata Indian Science Institute, Vizianagram City, S. India. Price Rs. 2/-.

The author calls it a "book of strange secrets, wonders and mysteries." We regret we cannot recommend it to our readers.

**IN THE SERVICE OF MY LORD.** By Y. Jagannadham, B.A., Sathanga Office, Musulipatam, S. India. Price As. 8.

An interesting booklet of 4 chapters containing discourses on the different aspects of God, the creation of various worlds, the divisions of mankind and on the practical aspect of the *Gita*.

**GANDHIJI'S SATYAGRAHA OR NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE.** By Richard G. Gregg. S. Ganesan, Triplicane, Madras. Price Re. 1/8.

Part II of the book reviewed last month.

**ORIENTAL TIT-BITS IN ENGINEERING.** By M. G. Singariyengar, A. M. Tech. I. (Gr. Br.). Bangalore City. Price As. 8.

An interesting little book, showing profound engineering truths—upheld by up-to-date science of engineering—hidden within the village lore of South India. The writer has set his hand to a profitable work.

**A MODERN HINDU VIEW OF LIFE.**

By Chuni Mukerji. S.P.C.K., London and Calcutta. Price Re. 1/-

A Christian view of Hinduism, characterised by the usual ignorance, shortsightedness, misunderstanding and readiness to believe the worst.

**THE CONJUGAL LIFE OF SRI RAMA-KRISHNA (IN BENGALI).** By Matilal Roy. Pravartak Publishing House, 29 Cornwallis Street, Calcutta. Price Re. 1/4.

A beautifully got up book, written in a fine style, but marred by an attempt to read the author's own ideas into Sri Ramakrishna's life and teaching.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### THE PASSING AWAY OF SWAMI YOGESHANANDA

It is with deep sorrow that we record the passing away of Swami Yogeshananda on the 18th September last at Uttarkashi in the Himalayas.

The Swami was Czechoslovakian by birth. His original name was Henry Pelikan. In his early life at home he was one day shocked at the sight of the immoral conduct of a Roman Catholic priest and became averse to the professions of so-called religion. Imbued as he was with an adventurous spirit from early age, he left home while very young and travelled over many countries of Europe and finally came to America. There he entered a socialistic colony and lived there for some years. All these years his heart was thirsting for an unknown something, and he knew not how to quench it. One day, while at San Francisco, he found a notice of a Vedanta lecture by an Indian Swami. He attended the lecture and found the clue to the solution of his heart's problem. He was very much attracted by the Vedantic ideals of life and by Swami Prakashananda who was in charge of the Vedanta Centre there. He joined the Society and threw himself heartily into its work. He was deputed to Shanti Ashrama, a beautiful retreat in a hill not far away from San Francisco. There he lived alone amidst the lovely hills for about ten years combining meditation with active life. While in America he was lovingly called Prashanta by Swami Prakashananda, his first teacher. A desire to visit India

grew strong in him and in 1927 he came to India and was all eagerness to be initiated into the vows of *Brahmacharya* and *Sannyāsa*. His sweet amiable nature won the love of all and he was duly initiated into *Brahmacharya* and *Sannyāsa*. He had a great capacity for adaptability and wonderfully acquired all the habits of Indian life. He was always active and knew many arts and crafts and was sure to be of some service wherever he happened to live. He picked up Bengali and could speak it beautifully. He visited many parts of Bengal and even went to villages where he was much struck with what he saw. He also visited Kashmir, Kedarnath and Badrinarayan and many other places of pilgrimage. He visited Advaita Ashrama at Mayavati twice and lived there for some time on every occasion. He used to say that India is surely the land of spirituality,—most congenial to spiritual life and practice. In the inmost of his heart always burnt the fire of *tapasyā* which twice dragged him to Harikesh, the famous place of *tapasyā* by the Ganges. Here he was much loved by the *Sādhus* and every facility was provided him by them. After a short stay at Harikesh on his second visit there, he proceeded up to Uttarkashi, a much harder place to live in. There unfortunately he fell ill of typhoid and ultimately succumbed to it. His loss is indeed irreparable. Our only consolation is that he passed away in such a holy place, brave and calm to the last moment as befits a *Sannyāsīn*, and we have no doubt he has been united to Him who was the Lord of his life and soul.

### SWAMI DEVATMANANDA

Swami Devatmananda, a young monk of the Ramakrishna Order, has been recently sent to New York, U.S.A., to assist Swami Bodhananda in his work at the Vedanta Centre there. The Swami was for the past four years a worker of the Madras branch of the Math and Mission. By his sweetness of nature and spiritual life he always won the love and admiration of all with whom he came in contact. The Swami went from Calcutta to Colombo which he reached on the 1st September. There he was received by the members of the local Vivekananda Society where he stopped till the day of his sailing. On the 2nd September he delivered a lecture on Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa under the auspices of the Vivekananda Society. He took boat on the 3rd September and reached New York *via* England on the 5th October. We wish him a happy and successful career in his new field of action.

### R. K. MISSION ASHRAMA BARANAGORE, CALCUTTA

The Baranagore R. K. Mission Ashrama has passed the 18th year of its existence in 1929 and the report of work done during the year is a nice useful record.

**Orphanage :** The number of boys in the Ashrama at the close of the year was 18, of whom 5 were reading in schools and the rest were receiving general and vocational education in the Ashrama. The boys were given practical training in cane weaving, tailoring and farming, besides moral and religious education.

During the year under review the Ashrama was shifted from the old rented house to the new abode on its own ground. Two blocks have been built on the land but the accommodation is too small to meet the needs. The Ashrama at present badly needs accommodation for the following purposes: (1) Tailoring, (2) Cane work, (3) Weaving, (4) Carpentry, (5) School for general education, (6) Outdoor dispensary and Operation theatre, (7) Office and Library with reading room, (8) Show room for products of technical and agricultural departments, (9)

Cow-shed, and (10) Residential quarters for boys and workers. The authorities of the Ashrama appeal to the generous public for the cost of building at least two more blocks. A sum of at least Rs. 30,000/- is required for the construction of buildings for the above purposes.

**Relief Work :** Workers of the Ashrama are deputed to nurse the sick people of the locality and render services in time of cremation. During the year occasional and regular help with rice was given to the poor and the needy widows of the locality.

**Outdoor Dispensary :** An outdoor dispensary is attached to the Ashrama which affords relief to a large number of poor people of the locality by free distribution of medicine. The total number of cases treated during the year was 5,195.

**Library :** There is a library containing more than 2,000 books on various subjects and several monthly and periodical papers. It is open to all.

The total income from all sources including the previous year's balance amounted to Rs. 6,030-3-10 and the expenditure to Rs. 6,012-10-10.

Contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by *The Secretary, The Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, 39, Gopal Lal Tagore Road, P.O. Baranagore, Calcutta.*

### R. K. STUDENTS' HOME BANGALORE CITY

The eleventh annual report of the above useful institution shows the strength of the Home increased to 25. An attempt was made to give religious instruction to the boarders with the co-operation of a pundit, and facilities were provided for gardening and physical culture. The Debating Society held seven meetings. The receipts amounted to Rs. 2,250-1-9 and the expenses to Rs. 2,368-14-6.

The Committee pray that their work may receive better encouragement and their appeal for funds meet with greater response so that they might be given an opportunity for more extensive service.

# Prabuddha Bharata

OR AWAKENED INDIA

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“उत्तिष्ठन जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

“Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.”

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## CHRISTIANITY IN INDIA

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

I do not know much about missionaries in Japan and China, but I am well posted about India. The people of this country look upon India as a vast waste, with many jungles and a few civilized Englishmen. India is half as large as the United States and there are three hundred million people. Many stories are related which I have become tired of denying. The first invaders of India, the Aryans, did not try to exterminate the population of India as the Christians did when they went into a new land, but the endeavour was made to elevate persons of brutish habits. The Spaniards came to Ceylon with Christianity. The Spaniards thought that their God commanded them to kill and murder and to tear down heathen temples. The Buddhists had a tooth a foot long, which belonged to their prophet, and the Spaniards threw it into the sea, killed a few thousand persons and converted a few scores. The Portuguese came to Western India. The Hindus have a belief in the Trinity

and had a temple dedicated to their sacred belief. The invaders looked at the temple and said it was a creation of the devil, and so they brought their cannon to bear upon the wonderful structure and destroyed a portion of it. But the invaders were driven out of the country by the enraged population. The early missionaries tried to get hold of land, and in their effort to secure a foothold by force, they killed many people and converted a number. Some of them became Christians to save their lives. Ninety-nine per cent of the Christians converted by the Portuguese sword were compelled to do so, and they said : “We do not believe in Christianity, but we are forced to call ourselves Christians.” But Catholic Christianity soon relapsed.

The East India Company got possession of a part of India with the idea of making hay while the sun shone. They kept the missionaries away. The Hindus were the first to bid the missionaries welcome, not the Englishmen, who



were engaged in trade. I have great admiration for some of the first missionaries of the later period, who were true servants of Jesus and did not vilify the people or spread vile falsehoods about them. They were gentle, kindly men. When Englishmen became masters of India, the missionary enterprise began to become stagnant, a condition which characterizes the missionary efforts in India to-day. Dr. Long, an early missionary, stood by the people. He translated a Hindu drama describing the evils perpetrated in India by indigo-planters, and what was the result? He was placed in jail by the English. Such missionaries were of benefit to the country, but they have passed away. The Suez Canal opened up a number of evils.

Now goes the missionary, a married man, who is hampered because he is married. The missionary knows nothing about the people, he cannot speak the language, so he invariably settles in the little white colony. He is forced to do this because he is married. Were he not married, he could go among the people and sleep on the ground if necessary. So he goes to India to seek company for his wife and children. He stays among the English-speaking people. The great heart of India is to-day absolutely untouched by missionary effort. Most of the missionaries are incompetent. I have not met a single missionary who understands Sanscrit. How can a man, absolutely ignorant of the people and their traditions, get into sympathy with them? I do not mean any offence, but Christians send men as missionaries, who are not persons of ability. It is sad to see the money spent to make converts when no real results of a satisfactory nature are reached.

Those who are converted, are the few who make a sort of living by hanging round the missionaries. The converts who are not kept in service in India, cease to be converts. That is about the entire matter in a nutshell. As to the way of converting, it is absolutely

absurd. The money the missionaries bring is accepted. The colleges founded by the missionaries are all right, so far as the education is concerned. But with religion it is different. The Hindu is acute; he takes the bait but he avoids the hook! It is wonderful how tolerant the people are. A missionary once said: "That is the worst of the whole business. People who are self-complacent, can never be converted."

As regards the lady missionaries, they go into certain houses, get four shillings a month, teach them something of the Bible and show them how to knit. The girls of India will never be converted. Atheism and scepticism at home is what is pushing the missionary into other lands. When I came into this country I was surprised to meet so many liberal men and women. But after the Parliament of Religions a great Presbyterian paper came out and gave me the benefit of a scathing article. This the editor called enthusiasm. The missionaries do not and cannot throw off nationality—they are not broad enough—and so they accomplish nothing in the way of converting, although they may have a nice sociable time among themselves. India requires help from Christ; but not from antichrist; these men are not Christ-like. They do not act like Christ: they are married and come over and settle down comfortably and make a fair livelihood. Christ and his disciples would accomplish much good in India, just as many of the Hindu saints do, but these men are not of that sacred character. The Hindus would welcome the Christ of the Christians gladly, because his life was holy and beautiful, but they cannot and will not receive the narrow utterances of the ignorant, hypocritical or self-deceiving men.

Men are different. If they were not, the mentality of the world would be degraded. If there were not different religions, no religion would survive. The Christian requires his religion; the Hindu needs his own creed. All religions have struggled against one another for years. Those which were

founded on a book, still stand. Why could not the Christians convert the Jews? Why could they not make the Persians Christians? Why could they not convert the Mahomedans? Why cannot any impression be made upon China and Japan? Buddhism, the first missionary religion, numbers double the number of converts of any other religion, and they did not use the sword. The Mahomedans used the greatest violence. They number the least of the three great missionary religions. The Mahomedans have had their day. Every day you read of Christian nations acquiring land by bloodshed. What missionaries preach against this? Why should the most blood-thirsty nations exalt an alleged religion which is not the religion of Christ? The Jews and the Arabs were the fathers of Christianity, and how have they not been persecuted by Christians! The Christians have been weighed in the balance in India and have been found wanting. I do not mean to be unkind, but I want to show Christians how they look in other eyes. The missionaries who preach the burning pit, are regarded with horror. The Mahomedans rolled wave after wave over India waving the sword, and to-day where are they?

The farthest that all religions can see, is the existence of a spiritual entity. So no religion can teach beyond that point. In every religion there is the essential truth and the non-essential casket in which this jewel lies. Believing in the Jewish book or in the Hindu book is non-essential. Circumstances change; the receptacle is different; but the central truth remains. The essentials being the same, the educated people of every community retain the essentials. If you ask a Christian what his essentials are, he should reply: "The teachings of Lord Jesus." Much of the rest is nonsense. But the nonsensical part is right; it forms the receptacle. The shell of the oyster is not attractive, but the pearl is within it. The Hindu will never attack the life of Jesus; he reverences the Sermon on the Mount. But

how many Christians know or have heard of the teachings of the Hindu holy men? They remain in a fool's paradise. Before a small fraction of the world is converted, Christianity will be divided into many creeds. That is the law of nature. Why take a single instrument from the great religious orchestra of the earth? Let the grand symphony go on. Be pure. Give up superstition and see the wonderful harmony of nature. Superstition gets the better of religion. All the religions are good, since the essentials are the same. Each man should have the perfect exercise of his individuality, but these individualities form a perfect whole. This marvellous condition is already in existence. Each creed has something to add to the wonderful structure.

I pity the Hindu who does not see the beauty in Jesus Christ's character. I pity the Christian who does not reverence the Hindu Christ. The more a man sees of himself, the less he sees of his neighbours. Those that go about converting, who are very busy saving the souls of others, in many instances forget their own souls. I was asked by a lady why the women of India were not more elevated. It is in a great degree owing to the barbarous invaders through different ages; it is partly due to the people of India themselves. But our women are any day better than the ladies of this country who are devotees of novels and balls. Where is the spirituality one would expect in a country which is so boastful of its civilization? I have not found it. "Here" and "hereafter" are words to frighten children. It is all "here." To live and move in God,—even here, even in this body! All self should go out; all superstition should be banished. Such men live in India. Where are such in this country? Your preachers speak against "dreamers." The people of this country would be better off if there were more "dreamers." If a man here followed literally the instruction of his Lord, he would be called a fanatic. There is a good deal of difference between dreaming and

the brag of the nineteenth century. The bees look for the flowers. Open the lotus ! The whole world is full of God and not of sin. Let us help each other. Let us love each other. A beautiful

prayer of the Buddhist is : "I bow down to all the saints ; I bow down to all the prophets ; I bow down to all holy men and women all over the world !"

## UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

SRINAGAR, KASHMIR,

September 30, 1897.

DEAR R.,

I received your affectionate letter and also the letter from the Math. I am leaving for the Punjab in two or three days. I have received the foreign mail. The following is my answers to Miss Noble's questions in her letter :

1. Nearly all the branches have been started, but the movement is only just the beginning.

2. Most of the monks are educated. Those that are not, are also having secular education. But above all, to do good, perfect unselfishness is absolutely necessary. To ensure that, more attention is given to spiritual exercises than to anything else.

3. Secular educators : We get mostly those who have already educated themselves. What is needed, is training them into our method and building up of character. The training is to make them obedient and fearless ; and the method is to help the poor physically first and then work up to higher regions of mentality.

Arts and Industries : This part of the programme alone cannot be begun for want of funds. The simplest method to be worked upon at present is to induce Indians to use their own produce and get markets for Indian artwares etc. in other countries. This should be done by persons who are not only not middlemen themselves, but will devote the entire proceeds of this branch to the benefit of the workmen.

4. Wandering from place to place will be necessary till "people come to education". The religious character of the wandering monks will carry with it a much greater weight than otherwise.

5. All castes are open to our influence. So long the highest only have been worked upon. But since the work department is in full operation in different famine-centres, we are influencing the lower classes more and more.

6. Nearly all the Hindus approve our work, only they are not used to practical co-operation in such works.

7. Yes, from the very start we are making no distinction in our charities or other good works between the different religions of India.

Reply to Miss N. according to these hints.

VIVEKANANDA

## II

MADRAS,  
12th February, 1897.

DEAR R.,

I am to start next Sunday. I had to refuse invitations from Poona and other places on account of bad health. I am very much pulled down by hard work and heat.

The T—s and others wanted to intimidate me. Therefore I had to give them a bit of my mind. You know they persecuted me all the time in America because I did not join them. They wanted to begin it here. So I had to clear my position. If that displeases any of my Calcutta friends, "God help them." You need not be afraid, I do not work alone, but He is always with me. What could I do otherwise?

Yours  
VIVEKANANDA

## OUR MOTHERS AND SISTERS

BY THE EDITOR

The women of India are just now attracting a great deal of attention all over the world. None ever thought that they could come out so strong and splendid into the political battle and show such courage and public spirit. Well, this is seemingly one of the many paradoxes of this land of puzzles. But to those who could look deep into the inner workings of the Indian world and understand the ideas and ideals that govern our womankind, the present development has been no surprise. One point has to be noted. Our women could never have responded in the way they have done, had not the call of the nation come in the name of spiritual ideals—truth and non-violence (*Ahimsā*). And there is not the least doubt that the qualities of mind, manifested by our mothers and sisters in the present struggle, were directly born out of the life they have so long lived in their households and the ideas and ideals they have been following. Their new feature is only an outgrowth of the same principles as operate in their home-life, and not something grown in contradistinction to them. In the following pages we shall try to discuss some of the principles that have governed the life of our women for ages, and we

shall try to show their validity in face of ignorant foreign criticism. But we request our readers not to infer from our words that we wish Indian women to remain unaltered in future. Changes there would certainly be. In the present article we shall not discuss those prospective changes. We have already dwelt on them in our article on the Future of Indian Women in *Prabuddha Bharata*, September, 1927. But we must say that, generally speaking, the ideals that our women have been following, have a permanent validity. The future will see only wider applications of those ideals and changes in details, but not changes in fundamentals.

Life in India revolves round two main pivots—Woman and the *Sannyāsin*, and they at bottom represent the same principle. It is impossible to conceive Indian culture without the existence of the family. Nowhere perhaps does the family hold such an important position in the collective life as in India—for here the family fulfils also the function of the church—and of the family woman is the centre and the foundation.

It is patent even to a casual observer that women are pre-eminently absent

from the public life in India. It is true that with the growth of political life, this want is being partly fulfilled in some provinces. But it is still fundamentally true that women do not openly play any great part in Indian public life. In certain provinces they come out of the *purdah*, have freedom of movement like men and are without veil. But even there women are pre-eminently busy with their households : they do not meddle in public life. It thus appears that the world in India is divided into two clearly demarcated halves. In one, man alone reigns. And in the other, woman. Woman looks after the household,—man earns money, does business and fulfils the communal obligations. Her world is the family and his the outer life. This, in the Western eye, is a great disability of our women. Women are also human, they say, why then should they not function in the outside world like men? The idea of woman, as it prevails in the modern West, is that of man's equal in all respects, socially, culturally, economically, politically and conjugally. This idea has much to commend itself to the modern mind. It at least does not limit woman to certain functions only. There seems to be more reason and justice in it. But if all human questions could be solved on the basis of reason and justice alone, this modern idea could certainly be considered a decided improvement on the past position. But it is not really so. A look at the Western world would convince that woman, though her position is now quite equal to man's, has not found happiness and stability. She is unhappy. She does not find any lasting poise. By trying to become equal to man, she has lost her womanhood, her own self. She is restless and miserable. Of course it would be wrong to say that feminism has not made any lasting contribution to the welfare of woman. But she has no stability, and she has lost the graces she formerly possessed.

One important fact is often ignored

in judging the position of woman in communal life. The position of woman has changed in the West, not purely under the urge of justice and reason. The greatest pressure exerted was economic. Modern industrialism was bound to bring about profound changes in the position of woman. The West manufactured, the East supplied the market, so that the West could produce as much as it liked. This drew woman into the economic field. She as a mere household drudge, was a loss economically; as an active co-worker of man in the industrial field, she yielded more profit. This change in the economic status of woman was bound to bring about changes in other fields, in the domestic, conjugal and social life. But what has been the consequence? The West finds that unemployment is staring it hard in the face. The East has awakened. It refuses to be the dumping ground of the products of the West. The West has been over-producing. It must not do so any more. In fact, with the passing of days, as the Eastern countries would be catering to themselves more and more, the West will have to reduce its production proportionately. There must be smaller and smaller number of workers in the industrial field. Some must seek other fields of action. Why should not those be women? In fact, not long ago, one British Cabinet Minister openly deprecated the invasion of the economic field by women.

The communal life of a people, in fact all life, always wants systematisation. There is no lasting peace and gain in changing from day to day. The modern mind is so deeply bewildered that it has begun to believe bewilderment itself as the normal thing. The West, if it would gain the greater things of life, must learn to have some system and order in its life, and not haphazard action and thinking in the name of individual freedom and rationalism. When the spirit of order prevails, women are bound to be ousted from the industrial field more or less and

pushed back into domestic life. There is a very good reason why it would be so. If woman in the West has gained in certain respects, she has lost much in another respect. She is no longer the ideal wife or mother. She cannot build up a home, where new generations can be properly brought up. She herself has to be out all day like her husband. Housekeeping is more and more precarious. The proper atmosphere is absent from the home. The peace, sweetness, poise and calm which make home the training ground of life, cannot be engendered without the loving meditations and silent ministrations of wife or mother. Woman must abide perpetually in the home to invest it with the sacred graces of a sanctuary. The modern woman, who is the equal of man in functions and mentality, is ill equipped to make a home. Life has become mechanical, the deeper forces are absent. Man cannot replace woman in this respect. It is pre-eminently the function of woman. We have no doubt, therefore, that when conditions will settle down in the West, when order will emerge out of the present chaos, life there also would be divided between man and woman—the world for him and the home for her. This is not to uphold the *pardah*, however, or to limit woman to domestic functions only. By all means women should have all culture of head and hands and exert a potent influence on the affairs of nations and the world. But her primal concern should be the home.

In the light of the above observations, the present position of the Indian woman may not seem so bad as it at first has been imagined. It is quite true that she is too circumscribed. Her education has been neglected in certain respects, and her mind works often within narrow limits, which is due to the lack of intellectual equipment. But her fundamental position is correct. Let none suppose that the Indian woman is busy with the kitchen or purely household works only. It is the woman that

looks after the intricate relationships that exist between innumerable kiths and kins and neighbours in India. She is alert about the smallest details. She never allows them to lapse. Man looks after the business side of life. But the maintenance of these relationships is the duty of woman primarily. And she takes the liveliest interest in the activities of her husband and children. She knows the details of their works and advises them, and her advice is often valuable. No man will ever do a thing—even a business deal—without asking the advice of his mother and wife. It may be that her ignorance of business intricacies will not always enable her to advise correctly, and perhaps her advice in that case will have to be ignored, still it is always sought. It thus happens that, because of this practice, when the husband dies, the wife, a *pardah* lady, never seeing the outside world, often manages vast estates with the utmost skill and efficiency. Still we must admit that it is not in these things that we seek the excellence of the Indian woman. It is always in the mystic atmosphere that she creates about herself and in the home, that we find her greatest glory and function.

Indian culture is pre-eminently spiritual. And spirituality is more or less a discipline of emotions. Those fortunate few who realise the Lord face to face, have their life transformed. Their entire being is impregnated with God; and their efforts never deviate from the high level of spiritual truth. They feel rightly and act rightly. But for all others life must be an adoration to an invisible Divinity. They do not clearly or even vaguely perceive the spiritual goal towards which they have to travel and in reference to which they have to mould their life and control their thoughts, feelings and actions. As impulses, in the last analysis, are the guide of life and action, their primary duty is the right regulation of impulse. They must learn to feel rightly. The impulses of a man of spiritual realisation are spontaneously correct. Those of an

ordinary man have to be made so by strenuous efforts.

Men, engaged in various activities, especially in earning money, have to depend largely on their womankind to maintain the correct level of their thought and feeling. Without their help, the turmoils of life would easily submerge them in materialism. In India, therefore, the mother and the wife have the responsibility of maintaining the true tone in the life of their children and husbands. This is the keynote of the life of an Indian household. Through prayer and service, women create the proper atmosphere in the home, so that whatever the men-folk may be doing outside, at home they must always dwell as it were on the threshold of the chapel. The excessive religious enthusiasm of our women, sometimes manifesting as a fanatical regard for ceremonial purity, is sometimes ridiculed by certain critics. That is because they fail to understand the inwardness of it. The spiritual idealism of modern India, it must be remembered, is largely due to our women. The reason why we are not yet engulfed by the aggressive secularism of the West, is due to *their* conservatism. They are faithful in every respect—to their people, to their religion, and to their God. This faith still holds together the best elements of Indian domestic life.

But mere religious enthusiasm would have availed little if there were not a superabundance of love. It is love that tells even in difficult situations. Our women's actions may appear unreasonable to us. Their commands may not appeal to our common sense. But the love that accompanies these, endows them with a sweetness of perfection, which is irresistible. This love and affection often hold in check otherwise refractory natures. Foreigners have often observed the disparity between the intellectual convictions of an educated Indian and his actions under the influence of his family. And they have laughed at his impotence. They do not know that an Indian considers correct

feeling as higher and more precious than a correct idea. How can an Indian, knowing that to feel truly is infinitely better than to be rational, resist the appeal of his home where, in spite of lack of modern knowledge, there is still an intensity of noble feeling?

The lack of modern accomplishments in our women is undoubtedly regrettable. This has accentuated the division between the home and the outside world. But perhaps this is not without its saving graces. The modern age with its tremendous need of readjustment in every sphere of life, is drawing us more and more into the vortex of mad action. Hurry and bustle, strife and struggle—from the waking hour to sleep it is one continuous physical movement. There is no rest for the mind. It finds no time or opportunity to dive deep into the inner being wherein is real peace and fulfilment. Perhaps this mad whirl of action is unavoidable. Evidently we have to pass through this phase of history. But while the outside is full of noise and clamour, the home may remain cool as an oasis. If modernism, however, catches hold of our woman-kind, the home would naturally lose its intense conventual atmosphere, unless a new spiritual background is set up beforehand. Men would miss the soothing influence. If our women are not modern enough, they at least radiate the calm of the Eternal. Perhaps it is too much to hope, nor is it desirable, that our women should remain exactly as they now are. But in the mean time let us not forget the strength of our present position.

## II

A proper understanding of the position of women in Indian life and the secret of her greatness would be impossible if we do not remember the above facts. It would be futile to judge by the exterior. Not merely of Indian women, but of men also it is true that they look upon correct feeling as the primary thing. It is through the heart that the deeper truths of life and reality are

revealed. We gain in personality and reach the heart of things through purified emotions. So actions do not matter. It is the motive behind, the will and the aspiration, that count. If we have the proper motive, even the most menial action would be transformed into worship. This is no mere philosophical ideal—a counsel of perfection. It is intensely believed in by most Indians. Greater attention is paid to the motive and less to its expression. This is pre-eminently true of our women. It is natural to love and serve one's husband, children and other relations, and this love and service can be easily raised to higher levels. The domestic works that they do, are, therefore, not what they appear to us. To them, these are suffused with a celestial light. Household work is not mere drudgery. We have to note this fact. The works that our women do at home are not a cruel superimposition. Our women are not like slaves to us, whom we work day and night for our comfort while we look on without sharing their burden. This view is altogether wrong. When we look at from the outside and do not take into account the spirit that lies behind, we are apt to make these strange mistakes, especially when there are preconceptions. Our women never think that their men have superimposed cruel tasks on them. The very idea is absurd. In India, marriage is not a contract. It is a mystic union between man and woman which even death cannot annul. With such an idea of marriage, the idea of the wife being a slave does not cohere. Our men also never think that way. And it is wrong to suppose that men do not help their women in domestic works. But it is true that women have the charge of domestic works pre-eminently. The reason of it has to be sought elsewhere. One must never forget that to the woman, her domestic service is sacramental. She considers it a great shame to relegate it to others. She must do it herself. Just as one finds no satisfaction in worshipping by proxy, so

the Indian woman is disconsolate if she has to neglect her household work. We dare say this is characteristic of women in every land. Wherever there is deep and true love, it takes the form of worship and finds expression in personal service. In India this fact has been so well recognised that it has been made into a kind of cult. Woman must never give up household work. To be able to manage with her own hands the entire work of the household with complete success and satisfaction, is her pride and glory. Even in the rich households where servants are employed, the wife daily cooks a dish or two for her husband and does personal service to him herself. This is considered to be the right thing. This is not slavery, but the exaltation of conjugal life into a form of worship, without which domestic life becomes barren of spiritual results. Our men know this. They are fully aware of the sacramental nature of their women's services.

Our women get up from bed earlier than the men. They are about their work before others have risen. The house is tidied up and washed and preparations made for the new day at the earliest hour possible. Then they bathe and finish their worship and prepare the meal for the household. And they never eat before the entire household has been served. So on through the round of daily duties till all have retired for the night. First to wake up and last to sleep, their whole life is one continuous service. Silence, sweetness and an infinite patience radiate from their every movement. They envelop themselves and the home with a sacramental atmosphere. This is the most precious heritage received by us from the past, and this must remain intact amidst all necessary changes of the coming days.

Foreigners do not understand where the strength of our women lies. They look upon them as tyrannised by men, suffering, miserable. It is true their present life and position are not as ideal as they should be. But they still compare very favourably with modern



women. We in India find much in the modern Western woman, which we scarcely admire and would never wish our mothers and sisters to imitate. We have already pointed out that the modern Western woman is not such a happy being as is usually imagined. She is also not successful as a wife. A tree is known by its fruit. If the characteristics of the modern Western woman are so desirable, why is it that marriage in the West is becoming daily a mere verbal affair, losing its sanctity and depth? How is it that divorces are becoming more and more numerous? Why is chastity becoming a byword of ridicule? Why is the happy home becoming rarer every day? Why are women becoming more and more frivolous? We by no means indict the entire womanhood of the West. But much of the so-called modernism of the Western woman is of questionable merit,—it has yet to justify itself, and so far as our present knowledge goes, it has proved on the whole harmful. Sane minds are increasingly realising that the old-world idea of woman, as the chaste, faithful wife, dignified mistress of the home and affectionate mother of children, is more fruitful and real than the present-day masculine and frivolous aspects of women. When the 'civilised' nations are finding their experience of the modern woman so distasteful, 'uncivilised' India may well be justified in not condemning the present position of her womanhood. Surely there is much room for improvement in it, but not perhaps in the fundamentals. The purity, dignity and nobility of our women can stand comparison with those of the womanhood of any other country. Even our severest critics, if truthful, will admit this.

### III

If the first function of the mother and the wife is to maintain the spiritual traditions and idealism of the family intact, the means to do is evidently the perfect chastity, the *Sati-dharma* of the wife. Marriage in the Hindu eyes

is a sacrament. It is not a relation of flesh or of this life merely. It is a union for ever. To a foreign reader, such a description may seem too idealistic. But there are still thousands and thousands of Hindu wives who believe this to be literally true. On this belief they build their life, and out of it they draw sustenance and strength to go steadfast and unflinching through the vicissitudes and difficulties of their conjugal life. The Hindu wife believes that her relation with her husband is only a continuation of that of previous lives, and that it will stretch forward to the future births as well, until both have been emancipated by realising *Brahman*. The husband cannot leave the wife behind, however highly advanced he might be spiritually, and the wife also cannot outstrip her husband. Whatever merit the one earns, goes equally to the other. They must go side by side through all lives. It is a fond belief among the Hindus that the husband and wife are predestined for each other, and one day, through varied negotiations, they are bound to be united. There is thus an element of fatality in the relationship between the husband and the wife.

It is irrelevant to enquire whether this belief has any basis in reality. The belief itself is a reality, especially when it is so earnestly held. There is not the slightest doubt that millions of Hindus intuitively hold this belief and mould their life in its light. But we need not conclude that there is no reality in it. In fact, no great belief can exist without being fundamentally real. The secret must be sought primarily in the mind of the believers. We must remember that to the wife her husband is no mere man, but God Himself. He is all in all to her. Not in the sense in which the foreign critic conceives it—she the slave and he the master owning her body and her service!—but in the sense that she sees her Ideal embodied in him and as such pours out all the love and devotion of her heart unstintedly at his feet. In such self-dedication there is no humiliation or loss

of personality; on the other hand, there is a great freedom and accession to the higher realms of spirit. There is a beautiful custom in some parts of India. The wife once a year fasts for three days worshipping Sāvitrī (the great Hindu wife whose love for her husband compelled even Death to bring him back to life) ending it with the worship of her own husband. All these three days she listens to the story of Savitrī from the lips of the priest,—how she followed the husband of her choice to the forest knowing well that he would be short-lived, and how her great love gave her the spiritual vision, so that when the husband passed away in death, she could visualise the dread god Death and his emissaries and the soul of her husband being carried away by them (had she not dwelt so long on the *soul* of her husband and not on his body?—so she gained the subtle vision which comes to one only after much spiritual exercise). This annual observance of the Hindu wife is typical of her attitude towards her husband. To her he is an ineffable admixture of God and man. There is undoubtedly all the romance and intimacy between them as between any lovers. But transfiguring and enveloping them, there is this worshipful regard of the wife for the husband. The wife salutes him bowing at his feet and touching them. The husband places his hand on her head in benediction. In such a relationship, therefore, the wife always abides in the consciousness of the Eternal. And if the wife expects that the husband, that is to say, her vision of him, should stand by her through life and death for all eternity, who can dare to say that it would not come true? Does the Eternal ever fail anyone, when He is truly and sincerely relied on?

The Hindu wife knows what she is doing. She is fully aware that the body and the mind of her husband are in themselves ephemeral and imperfect. She never deludes herself that they are, as they may appear, perfect. And she also, common human being as she is, rejoices if the person of her husband is

beautiful and his mind cultured and noble. But she does not stop there. The Hindu wife is a very great idealist, the greatest perhaps of all human beings. From the moment of her marriage, she begins to idealise her husband. The process begins with going deeper than his mind and discovering the light of perfection in his inner Godhead. Through prayer and loving service, she intensifies this vision until it has become natural to her. Then her husband and God become one in her eyes. But this does not turn the head of the husband. It is true that as the head of the family he exercises authority on the household. But only to a certain extent. And even that is not because he thinks he is the master of his wife. He knows that if the wife serves him with a worshipful regard and absolute submission, it is not because of his so-called authority. He fully recognises that it is her way of spiritual self-realisation. It is *her* greatness. He is merely the symbol of her worship. He cannot lay any claim to it, it belongs to God that is in him. There is thus a paradoxical relationship between them. To the wife, the husband is all in all. But the husband in his heart of hearts ever refuses this worship, turning it deliberately towards a higher destination. He admires and respects the greatness of soul that his wife's devotion to him represents.

A word in explanation is perhaps necessary here. When we say that the Hindu wife looks upon her husband as Divine, we do not mean that all Hindu wives reach the acme of that realisation. What we mean is that this attitude and outlook is always there. We may believe in God and yet may not have realised Him. But the belief itself has a tremendous value. It regulates our life according to its truth, it spurs us on towards its realisation and it saves us from straying into other paths. Similarly even to *believe* that one's husband is Divine has a tremendous effect. And we may confidently say that this belief with many many Hindu wives is no

mere idea, but the very breath of their life. It is this that makes them overlook the imperfections of their husbands and patiently bear with them in their lapses. And this love always tells. It may be said that a more natural and human attitude towards their husbands would have been more beneficial to the latter. But experience shows that those who love silently, ultimately help most.

#### IV

The husband considers it his supreme duty to love and cherish his wife, giving her the purest love possible. He must never look upon any other woman with the same light of love in his eyes. We recognise only these several relations of men with women : mother, wife, sister and daughter,—all women must fall within these four categories. A Hindu cannot become the *friend* of another woman or *vice versa* in the intimate sense of the word. His love must be entirely faithful to his wife. She is his *Shakti*, his power and inspiration. She is his consolation in the hour of trial. However fallen he might be—he may be the greatest of sinners, the worst of men—she must ever stand by him. Her faith must be as great as God's, and God never forsakes a man however low he may lie. The husband, however, has the right to forsake her if she proves faithless to the marriage vow. This is undoubtedly cruel, but is not without some justification. We must remember that the attitude of the husband and the wife towards each other is not the same. While the wife should look upon the husband as her greatest concern, the husband's allegiance should be above all to the family and society. He must look upon the well-being of the family above his personal considerations. If there is any element in the family which it is considered would poison its moral health, he must ruthlessly eliminate it, whatever it might cost to his heart. It is an extreme measure and is applicable only in extreme cases—those of unchastity. In such cases, the Hindu is clear in his duty. All other faults may

be condoned, but not unchastity. To-day in the West, incompatibility of temperament, cruelty, poverty, all these are reasons enough for annulment of marriage. Hindus endure all these with a calm mien. But unchastity they cannot tolerate in the slightest degree. There are reasons. It cannot be otherwise in a community of which the one ostensible purpose is spiritual self-realisation. Chastity is indispensable for spiritual efforts. The Hindu race, of all races the most spiritually disposed, has, therefore, laid the greatest emphasis on chastity, and any defalcation of it, it punishes with the utmost rigour, not for punishment's sake, but for the safety of society. It is needless to point out that the unchastity of a wife is infinitely more harmful to the family and communal life than the unchastity of a husband. This is not, however, to condone the husband's infidelity which is always punished by society. But who can deny that the spiritual good of the entire household depends, in the last analysis, on the faith of the woman?

Another factor must be taken into account in understanding this point : The Hindu family is in most cases a joint family. The welfare of a large number of persons depends on the head's decision. He cannot sacrifice their good to his personal interest. Not merely in this, but in every respect, the husband's love for his wife must always take a secondary place in his thought. His love for her may be, and often is, as deep as the wife's love for him. But in all decisions and actions relating to the common good of the family, it cannot come in for consideration. It must not manifest itself outside. He must forget that he is her husband and remember above all that he is the head of the family and a member of his community to which he owes his first duties. That is also why in any difference between his mother and wife, he must stand by his mother and not his wife, right or wrong.

In any understanding of Hindu customs, the fact that the Hindus are pre-

eminently communistic in view, must never be forgotten. We live for the community. The communal good is higher than the individual good. In this we are diametrically opposed to the West which believes so much in individualism. Why are children given in marriage? Why should not the wife have freedom to order her own life? Why should she bow to the cruel orders of the family or community? Why should not she have a family of her own, herself the mistress and not the mother-in-law? Why should her lapses in chastity be so severely punished in consideration of family good? Why should not widows remarry if they wish? Why may not the wife divorce her husband? These questions we have answered in one way, the West in another. And the justification lies in our characteristic view of life. Our customs stand or fall with the truth or falsity of communism. Which shall man do?—Should he allow his personal desire triumph or should he submit to the communal good in case of conflict? One thing we must remember. Individuals are not such independent beings as individualism supposes. Their thoughts and actions influence the larger community. For the sake of the community, we cannot allow individuals complete freedom. Why has democracy failed? Because when we allow the masses of mankind to have their way, disaster is sure to follow. For they are after all ignorant; they lack knowledge and judgment. They need to be led. They cannot decide anything. They are unfit. Such freedom to the masses of men and women has resulted equally in social disaster. The Hindus, are, therefore, correct in thinking that individuals cannot always have their way. They must be disciplined for their own sake as well as for the sake of the good of the community. By submitting to the communal good, we are deprived of the pleasures of lower desires, but realise a higher individuality, which is the greater good. Of course the communal good must represent the higher individual

good, otherwise conflict between individuals and society is inevitable. Fortunately, Hindu community escapes this conflict. Therefore, generally speaking, the rigours that the urge of communal good imposes on Indian women, are justified, for they ultimately lead individual women also to greater good. The Hindu woman is alive to this fact, though she may not always explain it.

It is needless to say that this high idealism necessarily inflicts great suffering on the women. It is not always easy and pleasant to live up to ideals in this world of sordid realities. Hindu men are not all saints, they have their follies and foibles like other men. It is the great glory of Indian women that they still maintain their faith intact. Especially in the present days when Hindu society is extremely degenerated, when no society practically exists, when men's faith in their national ideals is so dim, it is extremely difficult for women to retain their faith undimmed. When men do not and cannot respond to the idealism of their women, home life becomes miserable. There is extreme poverty everywhere. Finer aspects of life are almost submerged. Men have forgotten their duties in return for the services accepted from their women. It is no wonder that the patience and faith of the women are being strained to the utmost. Yet the faith still persists. This is our glory and our great good fortune. This is the one lamp burning unflickering and undimmed when other lamps are extinguished or about to go out. And this will, we have no doubt, soon recreate the ancient sweetness, peace and strength of our domestic and social life.

## V

In these days of cheap idealism and surrender to the tangible and the obvious, our women may be tempted to forsake their noble ideals for more comfortable prospects. Why should women look upon their husbands as Divine and why should they be as faithful to them as they are?—it may be asked. It may

be argued that the attitude must be mutual. Both sides must be equal. Well, if men are bad, should women also become bad? If men fail to rise to the high level where the women's faith shines, should women degrade themselves for the sake of so-called equality? The fact is, there is no real and abiding joy and peace until we relate our thoughts and actions to God or Spirit; life's fruition is impossible either for men or women except in relations with the Spirit. In so far as women do it by means of love and service to their husbands, their life's purpose is fulfilled. Men also do it. They are also required to spiritualise all aspects of life. The difference is that while women are expected to concentrate their full mind on their husbands and all that relates to them, men are expected to practise spiritualisation in relation to the larger world. This difference is due partly to social customs which have circumscribed the women's world within the family, and partly due to the nature of women itself, which seeks to lose itself in the love and service of the dear

ones. The differences of masculine and feminine natures cannot be ignored. After all the experiments at equalisation, women are coming to recognise a fundamental difference in nature between man and woman. In any case, for women as well as men, there is no other way than the way of spiritualisation. By forsaking their present ideals they would only be creating new problems and difficulties for themselves and gain nothing real or abiding. There is no easy means of solving the women's difficulties. The solution lies not in forsaking the present ideals, but in asserting them more and more, and re-creating the dead conscience of our men so that they may rise to the required heights in their thoughts and actions. And when this has been done, the sphere of women's life will be automatically enlarged; they will naturally outgrow their present limitations and will exert a direct influence, not only on the family, but also on the larger life of the community and nation, though the home will always remain their special sphere of activity.

## DISCOURSES BY SWAMI PREMANANDA

It was 8 p.m., Tuesday evening, March 8, 1916. Some monks and lay devotees had assembled in the Visitors' Room at the Belur Math and were listening to the reading of one of Swami Vivekananda's works.

When the reading was over, Swami Akhandananda (a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna) said: "From to-morrow I shall teach them *Upanishads*." At that Swami Premananda (another direct disciple of the Master) remarked:

"What other *Upanishads* would you teach them when there is the living *Upanishad*? The life of the Master is the living, flaming *Upanishad*. None could understand the meaning of the Radhâ-Krishna cult if Sri Chaitanya had not been born and demonstrated it in his life. Even so the Master is

the living demonstration of the truths of the *Upanishads*. The *Upanishads* have been current for many centuries and people also have been reading them. And yet they bow down to our illiterate Master and accept his words as gospel truths. He never read the *Upanishads* or any other book. Yet how is it that he could explain those subtle and complex truths in so simple and straight a manner? If you want to read the *Vedas*, you have to commit its grammar to memory and read various commentaries, in which every commentator has sought to explain the texts in his own way. Innumerable scholars have been arguing over the texts without coming to any conclusion. Our Master, however, has in very simple language explained all those

truths, and his words are extant. When you have such a living fountain before you, why dig well for water?"

The day before, the birthday of Sri Ramakrishna, twelve of the novices had been initiated into *Sannyāsa*. To-day they begged a rupee of a lay devotee, hired a boat and went to the Dakshineswar Temple. Swami Premananda did not like this. He said to them :

"You shaved your heads (became monks) yesterday, and you already think that you are beyond all disciplinary restrictions? Unless one observes disciplinary laws, can one go beyond them? Those who have renounced—who are *Sannyāsins*, are the teachers of men. And you, having renounced, have become such. But how is it that you begged money to-day to pay for the boat-hire? Is that spirituality? If you wanted so much to see the place of the Master's *Sādhana*, why, instead of begging money, did you not go to Bally and beg the ferryman to take you over, or swim across the Ganges? Or you could walk all the way *via* the Howrah bridge. Then I would have known that you are indeed fit to be teachers of men. You are thinking that you will have *Maths* and from there spread the ideas of the Master, and that otherwise the Master's ideas would vanish from the earth! You may build as many *Maths* as you like, or you may take *Sannyāsa*, but if you have no spirituality, all will be in vain. On the other hand, those who are not building *Maths* or taking *Sannyāsa*,—the householders, if they have spirituality and live the true life, will surely be worshipped by people even though they may not wear the ochre cloth. Whoever will assimilate the ideals of the Master into his life, be he a *Sannyāsin* or a householder, will be great. The Master himself is spreading his own ideas. Never think that if you *Sannyāsins* do not preach his ideas, these will not spread! Rather thank your stars that you have better opportunities than the householders and are living in the

blessed company of these great souls (the direct disciples of the Master)."

*Swami Akhandananda* : "Six of us at one time lived in the same cottage at Hrishikesh for nearly two months. This very much astonished the other *Sādhus* of the place. They said to us : 'How do you brother-disciples live together? If only two of our brother-disciples lived for two days together they would begin to quarrel.' Once I told this to Vijaykrishna Goswami at Brindaban. He was overjoyed to hear me and said : 'There is nothing surprising in this. It is no ordinary thread that binds you. Was your Master an ordinary man and *Sādhu*? Had he been an ordinary man, could he have built you Calcutta boys up in this fashion? I do not wonder that there is such love and union amongst you.' He (Goswamiji) then used to live in the Dâuji's temple and I would occasionally go to him for tea."

*Swami Premananda* : "I tell you for a fact, I am not enamoured of the mere ochre cloth, I want renunciation and dispassion. I very much appreciate the life of Nag Mahashaya (Saint Durga Charan Nag—a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna). He did not wear the ochre cloth, and yet what a great soul he was and how great was his renunciation !

"When I visited Dacca the last time, I went to Nag Mahashaya's place before I left. One of his friends told me that a Brahmin used to come to his house to read the *Bhāgavatam*. He would read a verse and Nag Mahashaya would expound it for a long time. Pandits read the *Bhāgavatam*, but Nag Mahashaya actually realised the truths contained in it and they were, therefore, as vivid to him as any sensible object. His father, however, would not like his long exposition. He would get angry and say : 'Well, won't you allow me to listen to the reading of the *Bhāgavatam*?' Nag Mahashaya was infinitely patient. He would remain silent."

*Swami Akhandananda* : "Suren Mukherji, afterwards Baba Premananda

Bharati, was devoted to the Master. He visited the Baranagore *Math* for some time, and went to preach Hinduism in America. Once he went on a visit to Nag Mahashaya's village. As soon as Nag Mahashaya saw him, he began to dance in joy raising his hands and crying: 'Calcutta!' 'Calcutta!' That is to say, he had come from the very place where the Master used to live. Sri Gouranga also, you know, went into ecstasy when he learnt that the musical instrument called *Khol* which is played in devotional music, was made of the clay of the village he was just then visiting.

"You will be astonished to hear of the hard austerities Swamiji (Vivekananda) practised. When he was

wandering as an itinerant monk over India, I used to follow him. In those days, before he left for America, he used to place a coarse blanket, some fifteen to twenty seers in weight, on his shoulder, and have a bag full of books with him. Once he fell on hard days at Limdi, when a poor Brahmin gave him shelter. He lived with him for a few days. The Maharajah of Limdi, in the mean time, came to know of his greatness and requested him to come to his palace and live there. But the Swami refused lest his removal to the palace would cause pain to the Brahmin. The Maharajah, however, used to send him various royal dishes, and the poor Brahmin also would partake of them."

## PHILOSOPHY AND THE LIFE-VALUES

BY S. RADHAKRISHNAN

In India to-day we are faced by a real danger of ignoring the importance of ideal values in our anxiety to incorporate scientific conceptions and political devices into our national life. Many seem to think that political arrangements and scientific applications are the things which have the greatest value for human efficiency and human happiness. I am persuaded that they possess what is called instrumental value as distinct from intrinsic value; they refer to the appurtenances of life and not to life itself. I believe that politics and industry, necessary as they are, are only means to the end of the happiness of mankind which consists in the realisation and maintenance of ultimate values whose study and achievements constitute the problems for philosophy and religion. These latter give us the inside of a civilisation, the spiritual core of it, while science and politics give us the outside or the external aspects. Something more than physical efficiency and rational content is necessary for a stable civilisation and that is spiritual values. Hegel said: "A civilisation without metaphysics is like a temple without the

holy of holies." We cannot rebuild a civilisation without a definite philosophy of life.

The greatness of a civilisation is not to be judged by the efficiency of its railway system, or the number of its battle-ships, or the extent to which machine-made goods have replaced handicrafts within its borders, or its reserve of gold, or system of ballot. No, it has its own proper excellence. Human happiness belongs to a dimension other than physical development or intellectual efficiency, important as these are. Man is not a mere physical body with certain natural propensities, not a mere intellectual being ever busy with devising ways and means for satisfying the natural propensities, but is a soul, a conscious manifestation of the universal self, a spiritual being. His real excellence consists in the manifestation of the soul in him.

The danger of modern civilisation with its excessive concern for the objective and the concrete is that the soul in man is not getting its chance. Human beings are becoming transformed into machines. If it took centuries of bio-

logical evolution for the animal to grow into the human being, we seem to be witnessing to-day the gradual transformation of the human being into a machine. The insistence on body and mind to the neglect of the spirit in man is leading to a mechanised life. In the world of body and mind, we are more like than unlike others. We eat the same dinners, wear the same clothes, live in the same houses—which are more human packing cases than homes—profess the same opinions. In a mechanised society, it is more easy to be a cog than an inventor, a Babbitt than a Blake. It is difficult to resist the pull of the crowd. A mechanical civilisation flattens everything out. If our ancient sages retreated into themselves neglecting external life, we seem to ignore all inwardness in our craze for external achievement. The nature of man has overflowed into the tool and we have no time to stand and stare and shape life into significant form. Peaceful intervals for the loafing of the spirit are squeezed out. We have become public phenomena, leading formal lives, superficial to the point of soullessness. That is why we lack centrality, repose, poise. We are not at peace with ourselves. The hunger of the soul is unsatisfied. We disguise from ourselves the inner void by constant excitement. To relieve the staleness of life and stimulate our tired senses, gambling, sight-seeing, sex-excitement—which is the only indoor sport available to millions—are resorted to. Even the spirit of adventure is taking conventional forms as to who will drink the most or drive the fastest. Aimless melancholy and empty lives are maladies quite as mortal as illiteracy and inefficiency. The twin evils of exhaustion and excitement are the direct results of the mechanising of modern life. Only the delights born of creative work and beauty, and not the pleasures which result from costly excitements, can satisfy the spirit in man. In a civilisation based on science to the exclusion of religion and philosophy we are afraid of being alone. In the City of New York, I am told, if any

one asks for a room on the tenth floor, the clerk in charge asks, is it to sleep in or fall from?

I do not want to waste ink over the elaboration of the distinctions between the primitive and the savage, the barbarian and the civilised. We are not perfectly civilised if we do not develop a harmonious life of body, mind and spirit. A society which stresses the intellectual as against the spiritual, is a lop-sided one and is not in principle different from a barbarian society. We have barbarians of the body as well as barbarians of the intellect. Both of them make wrecks of human beings since they do not insist on the wholeness of man. Are we in essence different from the savage? He fought his enemy with sticks and stones; we do so with guns and gases, but fight we both do. His victories were won by courage and character; ours by brain-power and the weight and accuracy of the guns. He fought more with his body; we fight more with our mind. We are not any more domesticated in the world than he was. We are certainly more intellectual, but not more humane or gentle. Our baser passions are now armed with more destructive weapons. The ability to drive a car and handle a rifle, put on glasses and wear a top hat with dignity does not mean that we are happy. Men, the world over, are increasingly dissatisfied with vapid and vacuous lives, with the vulgarity and vacancy which are such prominent features. There is a yearning, a wistfulness for something beyond science and technology, for something deeper and more fundamental.

The scientific or organising intellect deals in generalities and remains impersonal and unhuman while the significant things in life are personal and human and beyond the reach of science and organisation. Organisation is only a means to an end and if it usurps the place of the end it becomes a tyrant, stifling personality and freedom. Abiding happiness and permanent value are found in the self-discovery of the



individual. In spite of scientific backwardness, social inefficiency and political ineptitude, our ancient sages possessed a true perception of the right values which make for human happiness. It used to be said that God created the universe in order that He might apprehend Himself. The Hindu view as developed in the Sâmkhya and the Vedânta seems to be more suggestive. The world exists in order that we may apprehend ourselves, attaining our full selfhood through response to whatever in it corresponds to our growing personality, by acquiring each his own place in the world by sincere effort, by stationing oneself in the proper way towards the great facts of the universe.

It is not possible in a short article to discuss with any approach to adequacy the need for spiritual emphasis in modern life. If a distinction which is a strictly relative one, is permitted, we may say that there is a great emphasis on the intellectual in Western thought and on the spiritual in the Eastern. Reason, analysis, action, progress are the Western heritage. Calm, cultivation of the inner life, the surrender of the mind to the pure attraction of the light, the striving of the spirit to the securing of what is sacred and good, the Eastern.

Cognitive awareness or knowledge is of different kinds. The perceptual variety helps us to know the sensible characters of the external world. We have intellectual or logical knowledge obtained by the processes of analysis and synthesis. It gives us logical or conceptual knowledge which is indirect and symbolic in character. These two types of awareness help us to acquire proper control over the environment. It is contended by some, notably Bradley and Bergson, that conceptual knowledge breaks up the original integrity of the object and gives us only a diagrammatic or conceptual reconstruction of the object. If we speak about sleep, its nature and conditions, we know all about it except the sleep itself. The

object is not merely a putting together of the class characters or the aspects or qualities it has. There is also knowledge of the object in its intimate individuality. Perceptual knowledge gives us outward characters, logical knowledge and conceptual relations, while integral knowledge gives us the entire object in its individuality. It is knowledge by being and not by senses or symbols. There are aspects of reality where no other kind of knowledge is possible. Take an emotion like that of anger. Sense-knowledge of it is not possible except in regard to its superficial manifestation; intellectual knowledge is unavailing until the data are supplied from somewhere else. We know the mood of anger by passing through it. No one can understand fully the force of human love or parental affection, who has not himself been through them. No amount of intellectual analysis or imaginative reconstruction can help us to know in its true nature what it is to be in love. To know love truly we must be in love. It is a case of knowledge by being. Self-knowledge, for example, is born of an identity between that which knows and that which is known. The typical Western mind is inclined to ignore this third kind of knowledge.

Speaking in general terms, for Western thought there is no other higher authority than logical reason. Thought can discover by its own strength the system of truth. Socrates is credited by Aristotle with two things, inductive arguments and universal definitions. Whatever is real must have a definable form. The classification of moral concepts is the first step to any improvement in practice. For Plato geometry was the model science after which all truths should be framed. Aristotle invented the science of logic. Man is for him pre-eminently a reasoning animal. Logic for the Greeks is not so much a science of discovery as one of proof. The civic life of the ancient Greeks centred round the assembly and the law courts and so great attention

was paid to intellectual subtlety and mental dexterity. To secure victory in debate was the great aim, and to that end the mastery of the technique of the game of argument was necessary. More prominence was given to the expression and communication of thought than to its discovery and exploration. With the growth of natural sciences which were interested in pushing back the frontiers of knowledge through experiment and verification, the processes by which belief grew and thoughts evolved engaged attention. But even the methodology of the sciences is concerned with the grammar of discovery and not the life or art of it. The latter by its very nature sets limits to logical exposition and yet, however truth may be discovered, it can be discussed only when it is formulated in logical propositions. For Descartes, whatever can be expressed in mathematical form is clear and distinct. He sets forth a system of universal concepts of reason which are derived from a consideration of certain fundamental logical and mathematical relationships and these concepts can be applied to all empirical data. For Spinoza, notwithstanding his insistence on intuitive knowledge, even ethics could be treated in a geometrical order. For Leibnitz, again, the monads or perceiving minds differ in nothing other than the form of perception, for each monad resembles the others as regards the content of its perception. Each reflects the total universe from its own special angle. While the lowest monads, the plant and the animal ones, have only dim and confused mode of perception, divine cognition consists in completely distinct and adequate ideas. We, human beings, are in between. Our ideas of sense-qualities are confused, while those of logic and mathematics distinct. We strive to transform the former into the latter, sense-presentations into notions conceived by reason. The accomplishment of this idea means for Leibnitz the formulation of a general system of possible forms of thought and the universal laws of connection which

these laws obey. Leibnitz outlines such a scheme in his *General Characteristique* and thus founds symbolic logic which reached its great development in the works of Boole and Peano, Frege, and Russell. Kant's main purpose was to lead philosophy into the sure path of science and he inquired into the possibility of philosophy as a science with the intention of formulating its conditions. The nature with which we are conversant in the world of science and common sense, is traced to the work of understanding which arranges the sense manifold in an orderly way according to a logic which Kant calls synthetic as distinct from the usual, formal or analytic logic. Kant's successors took over the logic of synthesis and used it more rigorously to remove such imperfections of his system as the assertion of things in themselves. In Hegel, logic ceases to be a mere theory of thought and becomes an account of reality. It is an abstract representation of an actual process by which the absolute spirit reveals itself as the universe in the different forms which the universe assumes to human consciences, nature, history, society, art and religion. The rational becomes the real. British idealism is in the main a continuation of this tradition, though there are of course notable exceptions. The realists of the Cambridge school are worshippers of logic and the scientific method. From the Socratic insistence on the concept to Russell's mathematical logic it is one long illustration of the primacy of conceptual logic.

For the Hindu mind, on the other hand, the real is not merely the logical. It is something inward, subjective and experiential. It believes in the third kind of knowledge, knowledge by being, as the source of all fundamental convictions of life. The ideal of this direct knowledge is not contrary to the ideal of abstract logic. In moving from conceptual logic to integral knowledge we are not moving in the direction of unreason, but are getting into the most fundamental rationality of which human

nature is capable. In it we think more profoundly, feel more deeply and see more truly. We see, feel and become in obedience to our whole nature and do not simply measure things by the standards of intellect. If integral knowledge does not supply us with the universal major premises which we can neither question nor establish, knowledge and life themselves will fail. The fundamental bases of scientific activity, artistic creation and ethical striving are the ultimate consistency of the universe, the ultimate beauty of the universe and the ultimate soundness of the universe. These are assumptions for science and logic, art and morality. But they are by no means irrational assumptions. They are apprehensions of the soul, intuitions of the self. If we deny integral knowledge, if we make nothing evident of itself unto man's soul, we deny the possibility of all knowledge and all life. Disbelief in integral knowledge means complete philosophical scepticism. If we reduce all knowledge to perception and conception, disbelief is inevitable. The proof of integral knowledge is similar to Kant's proof of *a priori* elements. We cannot think away the fundamental convictions of life. Their opposites are inconceivable. They belong to the very structure of our self. They are not data received by it or attained by it as the result of intellectual analysis and synthesis, and there can be no perception or conception, if these are not assumed. All knowledge is a synthesis by which the scattered data of experience are pieced together into a consistent whole. But this synthetic activity is impossible and unmeaning unless we start with the idea of the whole which must be regarded as an idea native to the self. All experience issues forth from it and rests on it. Logic and life, intuition and intellect are specialised and peculiar modifications of it.

It will not be difficult to establish that the great philosophers of the West, Plato and Aristotle, Descartes and Spinoza, Kant and Hegel did make use

of integral knowledge, though they were not clearly conscious of its fundamental implications. "Recollection" is Plato's name for that concentrated endeavour of the whole man by which the essential principles of life and logic are apprehended. Aristotle's 'nous' is the intuitive apprehension of the first principles which all reasoning assumes to start with. Descartes insists on the clear evidence of God's existence yielded by the very nature of thought itself. It belongs to the same region of intuitive certainty to which the foundations of all sciences belong. The truth of the fundamental ideas is their clear intelligibility. Cudworth rightly remarks: "Truth is not factitious; it is a thing which cannot be arbitrarily *made* but is. . . . The very essence of truth is this clear perceptibility or intelligibility" (*Intellectual System* III, pp. 31-35). Kant's chief contribution to the philosophy of religion is his insistence on the logical indemonstrability of God. He relies on the consciousness of moral obligation. We know our duty, according to Kant, by means of rational intuition and not an intellectual calculation of results. When we ask why Hegel voted for a monistic conception of the universe, we see that it is not due to mere dialectic. Hegel's philosophy is one long dialectical exposition of the concrete unity, but dialectic is not the way in which the idea of the One was arrived at. We must put the One in the premises, if the dialectic is to deduce it in the conclusion. It is something more than dialectical knowledge that tells us that the universal consciousness operates in each one of us, the eternal subject is present in the mind of man, without which sensations would be blind and concepts barren. The Hindu thinkers were clearly conscious of the source of our fundamental convictions. The central point of Sankara's metaphysics, to take an outstanding example, is that the idea of the supreme reality, pure being, infinite and absolute, is not derived from the senses or the ordinary

processes of logical reasoning. Conviction of its truth comes only through realising it as the common ground implied in all our several knowledges.

The roots of all great thinking lie deep in life itself and not in the dry light of mere reasoning. Creative work in science and philosophy, art and literature, is due to this something which is greater than mere knowledge. Plodding processes of intellect may give us precise measurements, detailed developments of well-established theories, but the new discoveries which have made modern science so wonderful, are due to the inventive genius of the creative thinkers. The greatest insights are due to processes of the mind, which are beyond the level of deliberate ratiocination. When we consciously concentrate on the object, think attentively about it, we do not move very much from the point at which we started. We must let the intellect lie fallow, allow the object to soak into the subsoil of our mental life and elicit the reaction of the whole mind. Genius is a special quality. It is not easy to define it. It uses intellectual talents as its instruments, but it comes from somewhere further away, a source behind and beyond the intellectual, which puts compulsion, so to say, on the intellect, uses it for its own purpose of voicing abiding truths.

In poetic experience we have knowledge by being as distinct from knowledge of symbols. The mind grasps the object in its wholeness, clasps it to its bosom and becomes one with it. "If a sparrow comes before my window," Keats wrote, "I take part in its existence and pick about the gravel." A deliberate cancellation of individuality, a complete submission to the object makes the poet breathe the life of the object. The object becomes for the poet the specific form, the concrete picture of an idea, "a faultless essence of God's will," as Robert Bridges puts it in his *The Testament of Beauty*. The poet has the gift of realising this

experience and entering into it through appropriate words, even as the other artists attempt to embody their experience in canvas or stone. "Poetic creation," Carlyle asks, "what is this too, but *seeing* the thing sufficiently?" and he adds: "The word that will describe the thing follows of itself from such clear intense sight of the thing" (*On Heroes* III). Poetry originates in a moment of intense awareness following the act of self-submission. This creative experience is so unlike conscious mind that the latter feels itself to be inspired, to be raised above its normal power, by the breath of spirit. Without this creative intuition, we may have clever verses, technical exercises, repetitions of old themes, but not poetry. Plato distinguishes the man of genius, the madman inspired by the muses, from the industrious apprentice to the art of letters, and maintains that the latter has no chance against the former. It is all the difference between inspired poetry and insipid verse. Emerson called Paul's style "pure flame." When Carlyle gave the finished *Ms.* of his *French Revolution* to his wife, he said: "I know not whether this book is worth anything, nor what the world will do with it or misdo or entirely forbear to do, as is likeliest; but this, I could tell the world: you have not had for a hundred years any book that comes more direct and flamingly from the heart of a living man" (*Carlyle's Life*, Vol. I, p. 89).

The hero who carves out an adventurous career is akin to the discoverer who brings order into the scattered elements of a science or the artist who composes a piece of music or designs a building. Highest virtue is the result of intuitive insight and not a mechanical observance of maxims or an imitation of models. Virtue is knowledge, said Socrates; it is not, however, knowledge of the intellectual type. It springs from the deeper levels of man's being. It is an absolutely free and living adjustment and not a mechanical adaptation to a preconceived end. The spiritual obliga-

tion is of more consequence than the traditional codes and conventional standards. The behaviour of the hero may offend and bewilder the cautious conventionalist, but men of creative insight are liable to the charge of immorality. Sankara says: *Nistraigunye pathi vicharatām ko vidhih ko nishedhah.*

There is no greatness, no sublimity, no perfection, whatever be the line, without the touch of this creative intuition. The lords of humanity are shaped after the same pattern. They have touched the deeps of spirit and speak and act from that undivided impersonal root from which our personal thoughts, emotions and wills arise. The spirit in us is the supreme light. To adapt Emerson, when it inspires the intellect we have genius, when it stirs

the will we have heroism, when it flows through the heart, we have love. Put the fire of spirit on any altar, it blazes up to heaven. Completeness of achievement is always satisfying. It is a glimpse into the divine. As the *Gītā* says, there is the creative vision however nebulous and untried, wherever there is genius, ardour, and heroism.

Happiness is not pleasure. It is a state of inner and outer harmony. It is an accompaniment of creative work. Sense-pleasures are pale reflections of the true happiness which comes from real self-knowledge. Politics and science do not reveal the sources of human happiness; philosophy and religion speak to us of them. While the culture of science is necessary for the comfort of the world, the culture of philosophy is necessary for the salvation of mankind.

## THE MEXICAN ANALOGY

By K. B. MADHAVA, M.A., A.I.A. (London)

It has been said that India is a rich country inhabited by poor people. So is Mexico, which with its meagre 15 millions of people distributed over nearly eight hundred thousand square miles, and which for centuries has stirred the imagination of people as a treasure-house of the world, shares with India the paradox of a people starving in the midst of plenty. "Behind marble palaces and magnificently appointed public buildings, beautiful churches and public squares, refined manners and refined tastes, flowers and colourful costumes; a pessimistically resigned literature, in a minor key, brilliant intellects philosophising in vacuo, there is a large mass of half starved population working a niggardly soil, with primitive tools, always afraid of God, the landlord and the policeman." A reader in India would assume that this was written of this country, but Mexico too like India is a picturesque and fascinating country exploited fully by students of archaeo-

logy, and anthropology, history, sociology and politics, while from the economic standpoint both are poor and backward. Yet by a series of Revolutions—political, agrarian and social—for well over three centuries, and culminating in the one in 1910,—Mexico has shown definite signs of recovery and advance. To-day, we read, "food supplies are less scanty, and more diversified, . . . there have been increases in the consumption of meats, milk, fruits and vegetables . . . shoes are increasingly common and clothing increasingly adequate in essentials . . . the use of soap is increasing . . . progress has been made, though more strikingly in cities, in housing, sanitation and household facilities . . . shorter working hours and increased mobility of the population yield direct and indirect benefits . . . a middle class has definitely emerged and is growing in size and strength, and educational efforts are beginning to show their fruits." This is unquestionably the

most important aspect of the Revolution which began twenty years ago and is still in process, and which has brought forward a prodigious effort to liquidate the accumulated political, social and economic evils of many centuries, and thus brought to the Mexican peoples their concept of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness". The story of this achievement is not without its topical or permanent interest to us in this country.

It is necessary to obtain a fair picture of the conditions that existed in Mexico about the time of the Revolution, the more so as it affords the parallel to the conditions in India. The Mexican people are predominantly Indian, descendants of multifarious tribes speaking many languages, with much of their best blood wasted over internecine struggles and in conflicts with the invading Spaniards. The social and political organisations of Mexico were not such as to develop the potentialities of the people. "A ruling caste, roughly corresponding to the nobles and clergy before the French Revolution, dominated the mass of the people. Wealth and power rested with a small aristocracy of landlords, the Catholic church, resident foreigners and foreign business interests and a few politicians and Generals who were able to grasp a liberal share from time to time. The professional and business classes and the class of skilled labour were extremely small in numbers and in influence. Educational facilities were pitifully limited and much of the actual education, whether for rich or poor, was ill adapted to the needs of people. Opportunities for discovery, emergence, development and utilisation of native talent were well nigh negligible and the mainsprings of economic progress—ambition, enterprise and thrift—were actually dried. The white man who had asserted and had exercised leadership through centuries was notably selfish and short-sighted." The aims of the Revolution, besides being social and political, were also economic, particular-

ly as governing land and as governing labour.

It is very true that a nation lives ultimately on the land. And few people, except those that know, realise what a battle-cry land-hunger has been in the twentieth century and in the post-war changes. But far-reaching and unusually enduring changes have been wrought within this period in the redistribution of land. Agrarian reform has been undertaken on a vast scale in the two hemispheres at almost precisely the same time, within the very same ten years; and more striking than this coincidence in time is the curious parallelism in general purpose and method—in the transfer of land-holding from the few to the many, in the full enjoyment of the fruits of agricultural labour, in the great changes by which millions of labourers became small independent farmers. This rural awakening in economic and therefore also political liberation have taken place in both Balkan and Baltic states, in the kingdoms of Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, in the Republics of Czechoslovakia, Lithuania, Latvia, Esthonia; in all the "backward" countries of Europe and likewise in Asia too in the same way in which it has worked out in Mexico.

The land question in Mexico has been always complicated by its regional and climatic limitations, and it presents "the curious ironies of not being able to correlate altitude, latitude, soil and precipitation in the proper combinations." As successive invaders crossed the coast lands and deserts and reached the uplands, they found the really choice and fertile pockets, where the waters from the surrounding mountains gathered, already pre-empted. Hence the warfare between earlier and later arrivals, and hence the displacement of the presumably more effete and established culture by the more warlike and hardier migrants. There was thus persistent intertribal warfare and struggle between one village and another for land or for water. And then in response to the increasing difficulties of making the stub-

born soil and the unresponsive heavens productive, a ferocious and insatiable religion, which increasingly demanded sacrifice, first animal, then human, grew up with the propitiatory aim of sustaining the population. And so on through centuries, until when the Spanish landed they found a nation hopelessly divided and readily amenable to conquest and subjugation. After the conquest, a caste system, corresponding to feudalism, in land-owning rapidly grew up and land was set apart for the king, the nobles and the hierarchy, and with the serfdom of the native population they had a luxuriant existence. By a system known as *encomienda*, the native population was distributed and "given in trust" "to be made use of" on the farms and mines. For better handling of the serfs, some dociles from the natives themselves were retained as foremen, and these developed a relatively superior position over their fellow Indians, but they too were equally serfs even though by the barter of their own souls they mitigated their hard lots. The villages had nominally certain communal lands which were to be respected by land barons, but actually a steady process of encroachment took place, both by sale and by mortgage, until the "*haciendas*", the "great estates", grew up. This persisted for well nigh four centuries and by the beginning of the twentieth century, the greater part of the rural population consisted of serfs, their names of *peons* literally describing their condition of *peonage*. There is no surprise then when under these conditions the slightest incitement led these suffering masses to violence and bloodshed in each of the many Revolutions that Mexico was heir to for centuries. It is with the remedies that the Revolution of 1910 supplied, that we are concerned with here. The great leader Madero promulgated the promise of restoration of lands to such as had been deprived of them by the cruel "laws" of the land, but he did not carry conviction to the peoples as he mixed up this demand with general suffrage for which the masses did

not really care. The slogan of Emaliano Zapata for the immediate expropriation of one-third of the land of the haciendas and the removal of a number of minor disabilities carried more appeal to the landless and injured rural proletarians. But this manœuvre was soon discovered to be a piece of political or military strategy and his leadership too soon fell. It was the rebel leader, Carranza's, acquiring the control of the people and promulgation from Vera Cruz, famous law of January 6, 1915, which has been aptly compared with Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation in the midst of the American Civil War, that was the most earnest and successful attempt to solve the nation's oldest and most acute problem.

The Decree or Law of January 6, 1915, above referred to, provided that land should be restored to villages which could prove they had been deprived of them, and also provided that land should be given to villages which though they could not prove despoilment, yet could establish need. In other words, for the first time, agrarian reform as such, without reference to any particular despoilment or encroachment, was launched. In case despoilment was established, the process was called "restitution"; in the other case, the process was called "*dotacion*" meaning "gift" or "endowment". Two years later, in February, 1917, this legislation was incorporated in Article 27 of the Constitution. Under this provision, heads of families, males over eighteen years of age, unmarried women, or widows supporting a family, persons owning no real estate and virtually indigent, and such others are entitled to land to an extent supposed roughly to correspond to the ability of the individual to cultivate it. The amount, therefore, varies from one to four hectares ( $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 10 acres) of the best land, i.e., which is irrigated or permanently watered, or about twice that amount of good soil wet only by rainfall, and from six to twelve hectares (15 to 30 acres) of still

poorer land; and from about eight to twenty hectares of grazing land or even larger quantities of much poorer land. The legal procedure under which land is distributed is that a petition is presented to the Governor of the State by the villagers naming those eligible to receive land. He refers the petition to the State Agrarian Commission, which studies the needs of the village, the land to be taken, the landlords to be affected, and through the Governor gives provisional possession. The "restitution" or "dotacion" later goes up to the National Agrarian Council where after the evidence, pro and con,—pro usually from the villagers themselves and con invariably from the large landholders,—the Council awards its decision in the name of the Nation's chief executive. That is the entire proceeding unless there be an appeal to the Supreme Court which may grant an injunction temporarily, and if it find cause, confirm it later. If the Supreme Court fail to confirm, the land has permanently passed back into the possession of the villagers. Protection, however, to the large landholder too is given to the extent that his farm-buildings, fruit-orchards and other special plantations not only being excepted, he is left with some 150 hectares (*i.e.*, 375 acres) of irrigated land and some five times this amount of pasture land.

This was followed by a large number of beneficent and necessary reforms in national policies of protection, taxation and general administration, all of which have secured for the nation at large sustenance, contentment and strength. With this relief and security the nation is once more forging ahead in the path of its cultural and spiritual civilisation. There is great significance in the fact that this transformation came through a process of "reversion", a reversion not merely of the land to "the actual and spiritual descendants of the original owners," but a restoration on a close analogy to the pre-Cortezian communal land-system so natural to the native sentiment and evolution. Under the

present agrarian laws there is complete individual usufruct; the land is unalienable; it cannot be sold or mortgaged by the cultivator; it must be worked by him unless forsooth it is transferred by him to another on account of his inability, such as ill-health, to work it himself. Moreover, it is his land and he will not move. Twice the amount of "better" land elsewhere would not lure the Mexican Indian villager from his "tierra", a word which has a deeper significance than any other to him, meaning both "home" and "fatherland" rolled into one.

In spite of the fact that Mexico is essentially an agricultural country, and that the mass of its people live in small rural communities on the average of less than three hundred, and that what industry it has is largely extractive, mining and oil predominating, with a few public utilities and minor manufactures, there has developed an unusually interesting and significant trade-union movement. This development represents the story of the economic advancement of Mexico through its labouring masses.

Before the Revolution—that is, before 1910—there was no Mexican trade-union movement. Organisation was forbidden in law, condemned in theory, and forcibly suppressed by Government. A few vague radical ideas originating with itinerant Spanish anarchists had filtered into some of the industrial groups in Mexico. But, broadly speaking, there was neither an industrial labour movement nor an industrial philosophy around which a labour movement could centre. Between the years 1910 and 1917 the Mexican Revolution called into being a few organised labour groups who, for military reasons, were given special privileges and prerogatives of agitation and organisation behind the lines. As a matter of fact the Carranza government, before it established itself in power, regularly courted their services, in return for which the Mexican trade-union leaders



got a hold upon the government of Mexico, which proved invaluable in the development of their trade-unionism. As a consequence, when the Government became stabilised, they obtained for themselves constitutional recognition, and in fact they secured by statute in one stroke what it had taken the industrial nations of Western Europe and America one hundred years to achieve. These constitutional provisions provide for such things as the eight-hour day, limits on child labour, the right to organise and the right to strike, and so on. As the legislation stands at present, however, the enforcement of the constitutional provisions is left to the States, and in the year of grace 1930 there is a persistent demand for the transfer of power from the States to the central government for the codification and enforcement of labour legislation. The chief question, however, appears to be to unravel the mystery why a comparatively unindustrialised country should be elaborating such a complicated system of labour organisation. The answer seems to be, at least in the

minds of the labour leaders themselves, we are told, that what they are trying to do is to build up an institutional system in Mexico, which will serve to protect the Mexican workers from the evil consequences of too rapid industrialisation by foreign exploitation. Most of the industries are owned by foreigners, practically all active capital is foreign and the trade-unionists are acting as a bulwark against a too drastic and sudden exploitation by foreign investors. It is clear thus that the Mexican movement is not a radical movement in the older sense of the term; it is really a species of nationalism, and it is in one way a nationalistic development in a country, having natural resources but no capital, needing and wanting capital, and too shy to come out. And for students interested in imperialism, this presents an interesting and perhaps too original an attack on the problems which arise from the impingement of an industrial upon a primitive agricultural community by a foreign agency. The outcome of this attempt will certainly be watched as much in Mexico as elsewhere.

## THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION\*

BY ROMAIN ROLLAND

The spiritual harvest of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda was not scattered broadcast to the winds. It was garnered by Vivekananda's own hands and placed under the protection of wise and laborious farmers, who knew how to keep it pure and to bring it to fruition.

In the *Life of Vivekananda* I have described his foundation in May, 1897 of a great religious Order to whose trust he confided the storing and administration of his Master's spirit—the Ramakrishna Mission. And there we have also traced the first steps of the Order with its twofold activity of preaching and social work from its inception up to Vivekananda's death.

His death did not destroy the edifice. The Ramakrishna Mission has established itself and grown.<sup>1</sup> Its first director, Brahmananda, busied himself to secure it a regular constitution. By an act of donation prepared by Vivekananda the Order of Sannyâsins of Ramakrishna, domiciled in the Belur Math, near Calcutta, became possessed in 1899 of a legal statute. But in order that the Order might be empowered to receive

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<sup>1</sup> We can follow its development in details in the General Reports of the Mission, published by the Governing Body of Belur Math from 1918 to 1926.

gifts for its charitable work the necessity arose for a legal fiction to double the original foundation into a Math (monastery) and a Mission. The latter was duly registered on May 4, 1909, "under Act XXI of 1860 of the Governor-General of India in Council." The Math and the Mission are really the two aspects, the monastic and the philanthropic, of the same organisation, both controlled by the General Council of the Order. But the popular name, wrongly applied to the whole, is that of the Ramakrishna Mission.

The aims of the Mission, as defined in the Memorandum annexed to the act of registration of 1909, are divided into three classes :

1. Charitable works.
2. Missionary works (organisation and publications).
3. Educational works.

Each is sub-divided into permanent institutions (Maths, Ashramas, Societies, Homes of Service, orphanages, schools, etc.) and transient enterprises, activities of casual help called into being by urgent but temporary necessity.

In the Maths or monasteries there are regular monks, who have renounced the world and have received initiation after a period of novitiate. They are constantly moved from one centre to another according to the exigencies of the work, but they remain under the control of the General Council of the Order at Belur. There are some five hundred of them.

A second army is composed of laymen (householders), forming a kind of Third Estate. They are intimate disciples who come for spiritual instruction to the Maths where they sometimes spend short periods of retreat. They number no less than twenty-five thousand.

The other class of the reserve, rising to some millions, is composed of those who have partly or wholly adopted the ideals of the Mission, and serve it from outside without labelling themselves its disciples.

During the first part of April, 1926, the Mission held an extraordinary

general Reunion at the Math of Belur in order to form some idea of its full scope. About 120 institutions were represented; of which half were in Bengal, a dozen in Behar and Orissa, fourteen in the United Provinces, thirteen in the Province of Madras, one in Bombay. Outside the Peninsula there were three centres in Ceylon directing nine schools, where fifteen hundred children were being educated, a student centre at Jaffna, not to mention the Vivekananda Society at Colombo. In Burma there was a monastic centre with a large free hospital. Another centre was at Singapore. There were six in the United States : at San Francisco, La Crescenta near Los Angeles, San Antone Valley, Portland, Boston, New York—without reckoning the Vedanta Societies of St. Louis, Cincinnati, Philadelphia, Tacoma, etc. At São Paulo in Brazil a group of men have busied themselves since 1900 with Vivekananda's teaching. *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, and *Raja Yoga* by Vivekananda have been translated into Portuguese. *Circulo Esoterico da Comunhão do Pensamento* which has 43,000 members, publishes Vedantic studies in its organ : *O Pensamento*.

The Order possesses a dozen Reviews : three monthly reviews at Calcutta (two in Bengali : *Udbodhan* and *Viswavāni*, and one in Hindi : *Samanvaya*); one in Tamil at Madras : *Sri Ramakrishna Vijayan*; one in Malayalam in Travancore : *Prabuddha Keralam*; two monthlies and one weekly in English : *Prabuddha Bharata* at Mayavati in the Himalayas, *Vedanta Keshari*, at Madras, *The Morning Star* at Patna—without counting one in Canarese, and one in Gujarati run by the disciples of the Mission; in the Federated Malay States a monthly review in English : *The Voice of Truth*; in the United States a monthly review in English : *The Message of the East* published by the La Crescenta centre.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *Viswavāni* does not actually belong to the Order, though it is conducted by one who

The education given within the monasteries follows the principles laid down by Vivekananda.<sup>3</sup> "The aim of the monastery," he had said, "is to create man"—the complete man, who "would combine in his life an immense idealism with perfect common sense." Hence in turn, with hardly a break, the initiates practise spiritual exercises, intense meditation, reading and study of the sacred and philosophical texts, and manual work: household duties, baking, gardening and sewage-farming, bridges and roads, farms and agriculture, the care of animals—as well as the double ministry of religion and medicine.

"Equal importance should be given to the triple culture of the head, the heart and the hands," said the great Abbot, the present head of the direction of the

belongs to the Order. *Samanvaya* and *The Voice of Truth* have since been discontinued and *The Morning Star* has been converted to a monthly.—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> Vivekananda's spirit was essentially realistic both in education and religion. He said: "The real teacher is he who can infuse all his power into the bent of his pupil . . ." "who will take someone as he stands, and help him forward . . ." (1896, in America). And in his interviews with the Maharajah of Khetri (before his first journey to America) he laid down this curious definition: "What is education? Education is the nervous association of certain ideas." He then explained that it was a question of developing ideas into instincts. Until they had reached that stage they could not be considered to be real and vital possessions of knowledge. And he gave as an example "the perfect educator," Ramakrishna, whose renunciation of gold had been so vital that his body could not bear to come into physical contact with the metal.

He said that it was the same with religion. "Religion is neither word nor doctrine. . . . It is deed. It is to be and to become: not to hear and accept. It is the whole soul changed into that which it believes. That is what religion is." (*A Study of Religion*).

And I will permit myself to add that although I recognise the effectiveness of such an education, my free spirit is opposed to the dominion of certain ideas over the whole nature of an individual. I would rather use the same contagious energy to fill his being with the inextinguishable thirst for liberty: a freedom from control ever keenly aware of its own thoughts.

Order, Swami Shivananda.<sup>4</sup> Each one if practised to the exclusion of the rest is bad and harmful.

The necessities of organisation called for a hierarchy within the Order. But all are equal in their allegiance to the common Rule. The Abbot Shivananda reminded them that "the chiefs ought to be the servants of all." And his presidential address of 1926 ended with an admirable declaration of universal happiness, accorded in equal measure to each one who serves, whatever his rank:

"Be like the arrow that darts from the bow. Be like the hammer that falls on the anvil. Be like the sword that pierces its object. The arrow does not murmur if it misses the target. The hammer does not fret if it falls in the wrong place. And the sword does not lament if it breaks in the hands of the wielder. Yet there is joy in being made, used and broken; and an equal joy in being finally set aside. . . ."

It would be interesting to discover how this powerful organisation affects the diverse political and social currents that have been flowing for the past twenty years through the body of awakened India.

It repudiates politics. In this it is faithful to the spirit of its Master, Vivekananda, who could not find sufficiently strong terms of disgust wherewith to spurn all collusion with politics. And perhaps this has been the wisest course for the Mission to pursue. For its religious, intellectual and social action, eminently pro-Indian as it is, is exercised in the profound and silent depths of the nation, without giving any provocation to the British power to fester it.

But even so it has been obliged to lull the suspicions of the ever vigilant watch-dogs by continual prudence. On more than one occasion Indian revolutionaries, by using the words and name

<sup>4</sup> Presidential Address of the first Convention of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, April 1, 1926.

of Vivekananda, have placed it in a very embarrassing position. On the other hand its formal declarations of abstention from politics during hours of national crisis, have laid it open more than once to the accusation of patriots that it is indifferent to the liberties of India. The second General Report of the Mission, which appeared in May, 1919, testified to these difficulties and laid down precisely the non-political line the Math was to follow. It is not necessary to give a summary of it here.

1906, the year of the division of the Province of Bengal, marked the beginning of the Swadeshi movement and political unrest. The Mission refused to take any part in them. It even thought it prudent to suspend its work of preaching in Calcutta, Dacca and Western Bengal, although it still carried on its charitable activities. In 1908 it was obliged to make a rule not to receive strangers at night in its establishments, because it feared that some were abusing its hospitality in order to prepare their political offensives. It transpired from the answers of political prisoners that more than one, disguised under the robe of a Sannyâsin, had cloaked their designs under the name of its work and religion. Copies of the *Gîtâ* and Vivekananda's writings were found on several of them. The Government kept a strict watch over the Mission, but it continued to preach its ideal of social service; it publicly reproved all sectarian and vengeful spirit, and even condemned selfish patriotism, pointing out that eventually it led to degradation and ruin. It replied alike to the accusations of the patriots and the suspicions of the Government by these words of Vivekananda, which were inscribed on the covers of its publications: "The national ideals of India are Renunciation and Service. Intensify her in those channels and the rest will take care of itself."

Nevertheless, the struggle grew more bitter. According to their usual tactics of compromising all independent spirits, the revolutionary agitators used in a

twisted form portions of the religious and philosophical publications of the Mission. In spite of its public declaration in April, 1914, the Government of Bengal in its Administration Report of 1915 accused the Mission and its founders of having been the first instigators of Indian nationalism.

And in 1916 the first Governor of Bengal, Lord Carmichael, although he sympathised with Ramakrishna Mission's work, announced publicly that terrorists were becoming its members in order to achieve their ends with more ease: nothing more was needed for the dissolution of the Mission. Fortunately devoted English and American friends in high places came forward and warmly supported its defence in a long Memorial of January 22, 1917, so that the danger was averted.

It has been seen that, like Gandhi, the Ramakrishna Mission absolutely repudiates violence in politics. But it is remarkable that the violent have more than once invoked it, despite its protestations: a thing that I believe they have never dreamed of doing in the case of Gandhi. And yet Ramakrishna's followers, more absolutely than Gandhi, reject all compromise, not only with certain forms of politics, but with them all.

This seeming paradox comes from the individual character—I might almost say—from the temperament, of Vivekananda, their Master. His fighting and ardent Kshatriya nature appears even in his renunciation and Ahimsâ (Non-resistance).

"He used to say that the Vedânta may be professed by a coward, but it could be put into practice only by the most stout-hearted. The Vedânta was strong meat for weak stomachs. One of his favourite illustrations used to be that the doctrine of non-resistance necessarily involved the capacity and ability to resist and a conscious refraining from having recourse to resistance. If a strong man, he used to say, deliberately refrained from making use of his strength against either a rash or

weak opponent, then he could legitimately claim higher motives for his action. If, on the other hand, there was no obvious superiority of strength or the strength really lay on the side of his opponent, then the absence of the use of strength naturally raised the suspicion of cowardice. He used to say that that was the real essence of the advice of Sri Krishna to Arjuna."

And talking to Sister Nivedita in 1898 he said :

"I preach only the Upanishads. And of the Upanishads, it is only that one idea—*strength*. The quintessence of Vedas and Vedanta and all, lies in that one word. Buddha's teaching was Non-resistance or Non-injury. But I think this a better way of teaching the same thing. For behind that Non-injury lay a dreadful weakness. It is weakness that conceives the idea of resistance. I do not think of punishing or escaping from a drop of sea-spray. It is nothing to me. Yet to the mosquito it would be serious. Now I would make all injury like that. Strength and fearlessness. My own ideal is that giant of a saint whom they killed in the Mutiny, and who broke his silence, when stabbed to the heart, to say—'And thou also art He!'"

Here we can recognise Gandhi's conception : a *Non-resistance* in name, that is in reality the most potent of Resistances,—a *Non-acceptation*,<sup>5</sup> only fit for

<sup>5</sup> The temperament of a born fighter like Vivekananda could only have arrived at this heroic ideal of Non-acceptation without violence, by violating his own nature. And he did not attain to it without a long struggle.

Even in 1898 before the pilgrimage to Kshir-bhavâni, which produced a moral revolution in him, when he was asked : "What should we do when we see the strong oppress the weak?" he replied : "Why, thrash the strong, of course."

On another occasion he said :

"Even forgiveness, if weak and passive, is not true: fight is better. *Forgive* when you could bring (if you wished) legions of angels to an easy victory." (That is to say, forgive when you are the stronger.)

Another asked him :

spiritual heroes. There is no place in it for cowards. . . . But if, in practice, Gandhi's ideal is akin to that of Vivekananda, to what passionate heights did Vivekananda carry it! With Gandhi all things are moderated, calm and constant. With Vivekananda everything is a paroxysm, of pride, of faith, or of love. Under each of his words can be felt the brazier of the burning Atman—the Soul-God. It is then easy to understand that exalted revolutionary individualism has wished to use these flames in social incendiarism, and this is a danger that the wise successors of the great Swami, who have charge of his heritage, have often had to avoid.

Further the tenacious and unwavering moderation of Gandhi's action is mixed up with politics, and sometimes becomes their leader; but Vivekananda's heroic passion (that of Krishna was battle) rejects politics of all kinds, so that the followers of Ramakrishna have kept themselves aloof from the campaigns of Gandhi.

It is regrettable that the name, the example and the words of Vivekananda have not been invoked as often as I could have wished in the innumerable writings of Gandhi and his disciples. The two movements, although independent of each other and each going its own way, have none the less the same object. They may be found side by side in service that is devoted to public well-being; and both of them, though with different tactics, follow the great design—the national unity of the whole of India. The one advances to the great day by his patient Non-Co-operation struggles (it has been crowned with victory during the past year, 1928)—the other by peaceful but irresistible uni-

"Swamiji, ought one to seek an opportunity of death in defence of right or ought one to learn never to react?"

"I am for no reaction," replied the Swami slowly, and after a long pause added, "—for Sannyasins. Self-defence for the householder."

(Cf. *The Life of the Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. III, p. 279.)

versal Co-operation. Take for example the tragic question of Untouchability. The Ramakrishna Mission does not conduct a crusade against it like Gandhi, but better still, denies it according to those words of Vivekananda that I have just quoted: "It is weakness which conceives the idea of resistance."

"We think," Swami Ashokananda wrote to me, "that a rear attack is better than a frontal one. We invite people of all classes, beliefs and races to all our festivals and we sit and eat together, even Christians. In our Ashramas we do not keep any distinction of caste, either among the permanent residents or among visitors. Quite recently at Trivandrum, the capital of the Hindu state of Travancore, notorious for its extreme orthodoxy and its obstinate maintenance of untouchability, all the Brahmin and non-Brahmin castes sat together to take their meals on the occasion of the opening of our new monastery in that town; and no social objection was raised. It is by indirect methods that we try to put an end to the evil, and we think that thus we can avoid a great deal of irritation and opposition."

And so, while the great liberal Hindu sects like the Brâhmo Samâj, the Prârthanâ Samâj, etc., storm orthodoxy from the front, with the result that having broken their bridges behind them, they find themselves separated from the mass of their people, and partially rejected by the mother Church, so that their reforms are lost upon it—the Ramakrishna Mission believes in never losing contact with the Hindu rank and file; it remains within the bosom of the Church and of society, and from thence carries out reforms for the benefit of the whole community. There is nothing aggressive or iconoclastic, nothing that can wound, such as that attitude of Protestant rigidity, which, although armed with reason, has too often torn the universe by schism. Keep within the Catholic fold, but maintain a patient and humanised reason, so that you carry out reform from within, and never from without.

"Our idea," Swami Ashokananda wrote in another place, "is to awaken the higher conscience of Hinduism. That done, all necessary reforms will follow automatically."

The results already achieved speak volumes for these tactics. For example, amelioration of the condition of women has been vigorously pursued by the Brahmo Samaj, their self-constituted and chivalrous champion. But the suggested reforms have often been too radical and their means too heterodox. "Vivekananda said that the new ought to be a development rather than a condemnation and rejection of the old. . . . The female institutions of the Ramakrishna Mission combining all that is best in Hinduism and the West, are today considered models of what ought to be the education of woman." It is the same with regard to service of the lower classes; but I have already emphasised this point sufficiently and need not return to it. The excellent effect of a spirit that weds the new to the old has been also felt in the renaissance of Indian culture, to which other powerful elements have contributed such as the glorious influence of the Tagores and their school at Santiniketan. But it must never be forgotten that Vivekananda and his devoted Western disciple, Sister Nivedita, were their predecessors; and that the great current of popular Hindu education began with Vivekananda's return to Colombo. Vivekananda was indignant that the Indian Scriptures, the *Upanishads*, *Gîtâ*, *Vedânta*, etc., were practically unknown to the people, and reserved for the learned. To-day Bengal is flooded with translations of the Holy Writings in the Vernacular and with commentaries upon them. The Ramakrishna school have spread a knowledge of them throughout India.

Nevertheless—and this is the most beautiful characteristic of the movement—the Indian national renaissance is not accompanied, as is the general rule, by a sentiment of hostility or superiority towards the alien. On the

contrary, it holds out the hand of fellowship to the West. The followers of Sri Ramakrishna admit Westerners, not only into their sanctuaries, but into their ranks (an unheard-of thing in India)—into their holy order of Sannyāsins, and have insisted on their reception on equal footing by all, even by the orthodox monks. Moreover, the latter, the orthodox Sannyāsins, who in their hundreds of thousands exercise a constant influence on the Hindu masses, are gradually adopting the ways and the ideas of Ramakrishna's followers, to whom they were at first opposed, and whom they accused of heresy. Finally, the hereditary Order of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda has made it a rule never to take anything into the world that makes for division, but only what makes for union.

"Its sole object," it was said at the public meeting of the Extraordinary General Convention of the Mission in 1926, "is to bring about harmony and co-operation between the beliefs and doctrines of the whole of humanity"—to reconcile religions among themselves and to free reason—to reconcile classes and nations—to found the brotherhood of all men and all peoples.

And further, because the Ramakrishna Mission is permeated with a belief in the quasi-identity of the Macrocosm and the Microcosm, of the Universal Self and the individual self—because it knows that no reform can be deep and lasting in a society unless it is first rooted in an inner reformation of the individual soul—it is on the formation of the universal man that it expends the greatest care. It seeks to create a new human type where—in the highest powers, at present scattered and fragmentary, and the diverse

and complementary energies of man shall be combined—the heights of intelligence towering above the clouds, the sacred wood of love, and the rivers of action. The great Rhythm of the soul beats from pole to pole, from intense concentration to "*Seid umschlungen, Millionen!*"<sup>6</sup> with its universal appeal. As it is possible in spite of difficulties to attain the ideal in the case of a single man, the Ramakrishna Mission is trying to realise the same ideal in its Universal Church—the symbol of its Master—"his Math, which represents the physical body of Ramakrishna."

Here we can see the rhythm of history repeating itself. To European Christians such a dream recalls that of the Church of Christ. The two are sisters. And if a man wishes to study the dream that is nineteen hundred years old, he would do better, instead of looking for it in books that perish, to listen at the breast of the other to its young heart-beats. There is no question of comparison between the two figures of the Man-Gods. The elder will always have the privilege over the younger on account of the crown of thorns and the spear thrust upon the Cross, while the younger will always have an irresistible attraction on account of his happy smile in the midst of agonising suffering. Neither can yield anything to the other in grace and power, in divinity of heart and universality. But is it not true that the scrupulous historian of the Eternal Gospel, who writes at its dictation, always finds that at each of its new editions, the Gospel has grown with humanity?

<sup>6</sup> The Ode to Joy of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

## TRUTH AND VALUE

BY DR. MAHENDRANATH SIRCAR, M.A., PH.D.

An interesting comparison suggests itself. The scientific cosmology of the day has an approach to the Upanisadic truth. Professor Alexander has con-

ceived the growth of the world out of space, time and energy and has borrowed from science the indissolubility of space and time. Time enfolds space and

the primal energy plays in the eternal space-time order generating out of it the finer forces of life and spirit. Evolution begins with the cosmic dance of energy in the silence of the spread-out space and the three are the basic elements of reality. It is the space-time-and-energy entity. The complexity of the fabric of being arises as the evolution proceeds. And the more is the ascent in the evolution, the more complex is the emergent dance in evolution. The life in its cosmic dance loses its original simplicity and acquires in the process of emergent evolution a growing complexity and multiplicity. This dance has as if a periodicity, and the drama is not evenly played all the time in equal intensity. A forward push is succeeded by a temporary inertia. Life appears first on the scene. Matter is ruled out of order. It gives place to energy. When the play of the vital forces becomes too much complex, the signal for the next higher emergence is hoisted. A greater integration and a higher unity in the form of mind with its light of intelligence appears in the surrounding gloom. The primal darkness is dispelled and the illumination of consciousness is hailed as the welcome visitor. Evolution cannot stop with the mind which can illumine a centre but not all centres. In the corner of this consciousness is felt the jostling of a wider life and, we reach the next higher stage in the onward march of life, the social mind and the Deity meeting the higher instincts of morality and religion. Professor Alexander conceives a scheme of cosmology from space and time. God is the last element in the evolution. Religious consciousness is its first blossoming in man. The more complex is the integration, the higher is the unity. God is the highest unity because of his being the last in the evolution.

Professor Alexander is inspired by the noble instinct of establishing a synthesis between science and religion, between reality and value. And his intuition is correct when he confines himself to the world of concrete realities. Science is confined to the reality and facts; reli-

gion, essentially to values. He, therefore, conceives a scheme of thought in which value has its place and recognition with reality. Behind the order of values lies the bare reality of space, time and causality, and the realm of value has a unique quality, not to be found in the basic reality though it comes in the order of posteriority. But this does not take away from it the truth of the values, for they present an experience not to be found in the basic elements. God may not be the Absolute of philosophy, but still in the sphere of values, which is the province of religion, it is the highest concept.

Professor Alexander has shown much ingenuity in setting up a religious system in an empirical metaphysics. But it is difficult to reconcile the order of values with his Absolute, and more so to derive the one from the other. The order of values necessarily is concrete and, therefore, may have full expression where self-consciousness has its full play of creativeness. Value and creativeness go together, and where the dynamic conception of the self is not at its highest growth and development, art and religion have not their finest expression. The Upanisads confine the religious values to the realm of the concrete expression of spirit, but even here the emphasis has been laid upon the finer and subtler move of life and consciousness yielding a wider range of intuition and higher intensity of activity. The values, however fine and subtle, are actualities in the restricted life of creative expression. They have no reality in the realm beyond expression.

This realm of truth is the realm of fact. But whereas to Alexander the realm of absolute fact has no reference to consciousness, but is the province of unilluminating space and its indissoluble companion, the unending time, to the teachers of the Upanisads the realm of the absolute fact is ever shining in the native light of intelligence. The universe is more illumined in the centre than at the circumference, for the silent light of the centre is not equally re-



flected at the outskirts of existence. Life in the centre is more serene, free and easy, for it is undivided and integral there and is not agitated by the surface waves. The order of space and time is the structural frame of life in expression, they are the forms of the immanent consciousness and cannot claim the absoluteness which Alexander ascribes to them. They may be intimately related to the Absolute, but to install them in the place of the Absolute is more than what reason and intuition can accept. The Upanisads have confined religious life in the concrete sense to the world of appearance, and though they have laid down a course of fine evolution in spirituality and freedom and an introduction into the finer orders of appearances and absorbing values, still they are clear that the finest intuition surpasses these experiences and reveals the transcendent truth beyond space and time.

The supra-mental vision makes us acquainted with the Absolute of Alexander's philosophy, for its very existence cannot be known unto itself. Alexander makes the dawn of the universe surrounded by an impenetrable gloom, the Upanisads see the dawn in the kindly rays of the light that tarry not. When, therefore, the concrete religious life is sacrificed for this majesty of silence, surely the seeker does not pass into the inconvenient and undesirable existence which the gods forsake and men shun. On the other hand, those who have once tasted it fervently desire it as a state of unique blessedness inasmuch as it frees us from the pangs of a divided consciousness. Life may grow in complexity in the course of evolution, but this complexity is the sign of finitude and imperfection, for complexity is invariably associated with other-reference and other-dependence. The highest existence is the simplest. It denies all externality and all reference. And, therefore, the tendency of seeking spiritual life in its fullest expression in the ever-growing complexity of life is to lose it. The Upanisadic teachers are quite

alive to this truth, and, therefore, their quest after the eternal life does not begin with the world affecting the surface life and surface existence, but in the finer currents lying deep beneath the surface. Even the finer order of values cannot be the last in evolution, it must have been working since long from within. The gross cannot give rise to the fine. It is rather the arrested expression of the fine. The sudden emergence of the fine cannot be accepted as a reasonable conclusion. The occasional expression of the fine values cannot prove their sudden emergence in the order of reality, it only proves that the fine can have rare expression. Evolution of the higher values does not mean that the higher develops out of the lower. It implies that the higher is at the heart of things and can express itself under fit and proper circumstances. The law of continuity is never broken in expression, and it is easier to believe in the archetypes of existence than to accept the sudden emergence of the higher concepts of existence and value from the lower ones. The Upanisads teach that the deeper we penetrate into existence, the wider and finer it is and it presents realms of archetypes which are always complete and perfect. The external is shaped according to the internal plan and harmony,—it is always regulated and moulded according to it. The eternal values are always present at the heart of things, shaping things and beings according to the eternal purpose, and they cannot be conceived as coming into being at a period of world's history. The perception of the eternal world of values, therefore, requires a deeper intuition into the finer planes of existence. The order of values is an order in space and time. It is an order in which our ideals are fully realised and we become free from the dualities of the gross life. And the ideal is more real. In the finer intuitions we realise them in their purity and in their transcendence. They are not here mixed with their opposites and their limitations. Life is, therefore, more serene and smooth, intuition more expressive.

The realm of values becomes more evident as we rise above the sense-mentality and dive deep into the silent waters of life. But the values cannot find a place beyond the supra-mental plane of existence. Their right place is the super-mind, they can have no existence in the transcendent reality. They are essentially creative forces, and they can be true on the creative plane. And naturally they suffer the restrictions natural to creativeness. They are dynamic. They mould the initial force. The highest values that we prize and realise in our own creativeness are dim reflections of the eternal values of the ideal world. And, therefore, in the moments of happy visitation of the land of wonders hidden in the bosom of creation, we are overpowered by its symmetry, its orchestral harmony, its creative accuracy, and the vastness of its being. Religious consciousness cannot rise above this form of revelation, and so absorbing is the realisation that the seeker who has attained this height of realisation does not feel the impulse to see the beyond. And it is the common experience of mystic life to be entangled by the richness and the music of this high level of consciousness and life and to mistake this to be the final intuition of religious life. Indeed it is the final realisation in the personal consciousness, and unless the seeker is bold enough to lose the personal hold of life and to forsake its experiences of rapturous delight, it cannot have access into the sublime calm which resides at the centre. The intuition of the Calm is the final illumination of reality, beyond expression, beyond the space and time of empirical metaphysics. The religious life is an expression not beyond space and time of the supra-mental vision, though it is continuous with the supra-mental life. It has, therefore, the intimations of immortality. It is not limited by the em-

pirical time series. The Upanisads perceived the value of the religious ideal, and, therefore, has laid down a path for the aspirant to this ideal; but this ideal has not been insisted upon as the final pursuit after the transcendental truth. Immortality as immortality in time is the invariable consequence that follows the path of light, the path of Devayâna, which allows an access into the realm of light. It is still the personal immortality but it is not the immortality that follows upon the realisation of the timeless Absolute. So long as personality clings to the soul, the world of values has a meaning and a deep meaning too, but when it finally dissolves into the absolute background, the importance of value disappears. Value is, therefore, not a higher category of existence than truth. It looks like presenting an aspect of existence not covered by truth. But it is so when the different phases of existence are emphasised in the relative thinking. It cannot be true when the aspects of existence are lost in the Absolute.

The Upanisads have prized truth more than value, for value has always a concrete reference, and truth has no such reference. When, therefore, the Upanisads welcome delight as the highest promise, they hail it not as a feeling-consciousness, but as a freedom from limitations and restricted urges of life. It is the freedom from concentration. Truth does not imply concentration. Value does. Truth is, therefore, a unique presentation. Nothing of the relative and empirical consciousness can compare to it. The delight of value is essentially personal, the delight of truth is impersonal,—it is the delight of the evenness of existence at the centre of reality and not the delight of the creative order arranged in a hierarchy in order of the fineness and expressiveness of the manifested being.

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# KARMA YOGA OF THE GITA

BY PRAKASH CHANDRA SINHA ROY, B.A., NYAYAVAGISHA

The fundamental principles underlying the teachings of the *Gītā* expressed in a few words are these :

(1) The fulfilment of spiritual life lies in the direct realisation of Brahman, the all-knowing, all-pervading and all-powerful ultimate reality from which the Universe proceeds, on which it rests and into which it dissolves.

(2) There is one and only one way by which that reality can be realised, and that is by moulding life in conformity with its nature, or to express it in the language of the *Gītā*, by being Brahmanbhuta, or in plainer words, by leading a godly life—a life formed with God as the ideal.

(3) The practical exercises prescribed are : (1) Samadarshana—entertaining the same feelings for all beings as one has for one's own self and (2) Vairāgya—living mentally detached from all non-spiritual things.

(4) Samadarshana may be practised by always keeping in mind that God resides in all beings as the soul of their souls.

(5) Vairāgya may be practised either (a) by gradually excluding all non-spiritual things from thoughts till the mind is made to rest on nothing—a mental process which is technically called the path of Jnāna or mode of union with Brahman by true knowledge—knowledge of things in their essence, or (b) by undivided and uninterrupted devotion to God and God only—a mental process called the path of Bhakti or mode of union with Brahman by devotion, or (c) by action—action done in discharge of duties—duties done for duty's sake without being affected by the result, be it success or be it failure—a mental process called the path of Karma—a mode of union with Brahman by action.

The object of this short article is to

give the reader a clear and precise idea of the principles underlying the last mentioned mode, Karma Yoga, as it is laid down in the *Gītā*.

What the aspirant after God-knowledge following the path of Karma has always to remember, is that the promptings for discharging duties come from within—from God—the Upadrashtā and Anumantā residing in our heart; and, therefore, all that he has to do, is to try to do them to the best of his ability without being anyway affected by the result—be it success or be it failure. "One discharging duties with this mental attitude," says the *Gītā*, "is not touched by any sin—any mental excitement, which is so inimical to the acquisition of godly nature, just as a lotus leaf though floating on water is not soaked with it anyway." (5. 10)

Some wise men, specially those following the path of Jnāna, discourage action as inimical to the acquisition of godly nature. "Action," they say, "must be avoided as vice—as anger, jealousy, covetousness, inordinate desire after worldly things, etc." (14. 3) But the tendency towards action is a natural tendency. "Whether one likes it or not, one is helplessly drawn to it by nature and cannot remain inactive even for a moment." (3. 5) And more, "the maintenance of the body is not possible without action."

Now, as action is natural to man, and therefore unavoidable, and as every man has an inherent right to know God, action cannot by itself be an obstacle to the acquisition of such knowledge. There must, therefore, be some secret device in action by which the evil apprehended from it can be avoided. The *Gītā* tells us that "Yoga is that secret device" and Yoga is discharging

duties without being elated by success or depressed by failure. "Do your duty," says Sri Krishna, "being settled in Yoga. Preservation of mental equilibrium both in success and failure is Yoga." (2. 24)

Doing action in discharge of duty without being affected by its fruit, is then the secret device enjoined in the *Gītā* for attaining godly nature through action. But is it possible to act without being elated by success or depressed by failure? The *Gītā* says, it is. The source of our sense of duty is the prompting from within, from the Upadrashtā and Anumantā residing in our heart. This prompting is our authority for trying our best to do our duty. There is however no promise of success in every case, nor of any security against failure in any. This being the case, the fruit of the acts done in discharge of such duty, whether it is success or failure, need not disturb the equanimity of our mind; and this is what the *Gītā* declares by saying: "When one is faced by a duty, one has every right to do what is necessary for discharging it; but one has no right to expect success in every case." (2. 41)

Another fact which we should remember in this connection, is that if the source of our sense of duty is the divine prompting from within, the real doer of the acts done in discharge of it, is God, and our position in regard to such acts is that of a mere agent. This being the case, the fruit thereof need not interfere with our equanimity. This idea firmly established in the mind goes a great way to minimise Ahamkāra or egoism in action, which is responsible for the mental disturbance caused by its fruits. It is with reference to this mental attitude that Sri Krishna tells Arjuna that "one, untainted by Ahamkāra and unentangled, remains spiritually unaffected by acts done in discharge of duty, even if it be of such a terrible nature as to necessitate the slaughter of men." (18. 17)

It has been said that some wise men

advocate giving up action altogether in favour of Sannyāsa or inaction; because, they say, that whether we like it or not, action must of necessity result in mental disturbance. But does mental equanimity as a rule follow bodily inactivity? If not, nothing is gained by suppressing the organs of action, if the mind is allowed to wander about after the objects of the senses. In spiritual exercises, it is the mind that matters and not the mere suppression of the organs of action. And it is in order to draw the attention of the reader pointedly to this fact that the *Gītā* declares: "One who controlling the organs of action, mentally dwells on the objects of the senses, lives under delusion, and follows a wrong course; but a better course is followed by him who, while controlling the senses by the mind, performs actions with the body in discharge of duty, without being affected by their fruits." (3. 6-7)

It is further added that "one who can see action in inaction and inaction in action is really wise and lives in union with God even though immersed in action." (4. 18) Seeing action in inaction and inaction in action is an important dictum with reference to Karma Yoga, and its full meaning should be clearly understood. Why is action discouraged by the followers of Sannyāsa? Because, they say, it inevitably leads to the loss of mental equilibrium which is so essentially necessary for attaining godly nature. But they forget that the loss of mental equilibrium is not the direct result of bodily action. It arises from elation in success and depression in failure. It is these feelings that should be suppressed and not the normal and natural activities of the bodily organs. The object aimed at by inaction is the maintenance of mental equilibrium. But if, when the body is inactive, the mind gets agitated by dwelling on the objects of the senses, we have, judging by the fruit, action in inaction; and in the same way, when the organs of action are active, but the mind is made to

remain unagitated, we have, judging by the fruit, inaction in action. To be able to appreciate this is to see action in inaction and inaction in action. One who understands it, is certainly wise, because, he sees what the object aimed at is and is not likely to confuse the end with the means. "It is not," says the *Gitâ*, "possible for the embodied being to relinquish action completely; one who relinquishes the fruit of action, is, from a spiritual point of view, a true Sannyâsi." (18. 11)

It is further said that "a Karma Yogi who performs actions in discharge of duty without being affected by their fruits, is a true Sannyâsi and not he who has merely relinquished bodily actions both ordinary and ceremonial." (6. 1)

What the follower of the path of Karma has always to remember is that "one who remains unaffected by the fruit of action done in discharge of duty, is not entangled in the meshes of births and rebirths by such action" (4. 22), and that his ideal is God who, though acting incessantly, "is not affected by the fruit of such actions." "Though," says Sri Krishna, "God is the creator of such wonderful diversities in the universe by causing the Gunas to commingle in an infinite variety of proportion, yet He is not their creator" (4. 13), that is, though incessantly doing acts necessary for such creation, He is not their doer.

So high indeed is the praise bestowed on Karma Yoga that speaking of it in a most poetical but none the less emphatic way, the *Gitâ* declares that "to one who knows its secrets, the *Vedas* are of as little use as are small tanks and wells to a thirsty man when the whole country around is under water." (2. 46)

Karma Yoga as it is laid down in the *Gitâ* is unique of its kind for, in no other sacred book of the world, whether Indian or non-Indian, it has been expounded in so many words and in a way so plain, so elaborate and so exhaustive.

It should be noted here that Karma or action may precede or accompany all kinds of Yogas, namely, Jnâna Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Râja Yoga and Karma Yoga, but Karma Yoga should be distinguished from the rest by the mental attitude of the aspirant, and not by any external criterion. A Karma Yogi must feel that he is not the doer and suppress all sorts of feelings,—feelings of pain as well as of pleasure. He has to put up a heroic fight against the temptations of life, though all are staring him in the face. It is all challenge, aggression and triumph. A Karma Yogi may not have any philosophical doctrine of transcendental reality, or a popular notion of Personal God to guide, guard and inspire. He must have something to do, and in consequence he does not allow his balance of mind to be disturbed by any undue pressure of feelings. This form of self-control leads a man to sovereign power, and that to spiritual perfection.

The special mission of the *Gitâ* was, it seems to me, to teach Karma Yoga, and that, at a time, when Sannyâsa or absolute renunciation of action not rightly understood, was in all probability considered an absolute necessity for the attainment of bliss or Moksha. The *Gitâ* was a reasoned protest against this kind of Sannyâsa which led nowhere, as it was Mithyâchâra or hypocrisy. Repeatedly has it been declared in the *Gitâ* that the true Sannyâsi is he who abandons the fruit of action, that is, is not agitated by the result of action done in discharge of duty, and not he who merely avoids bodily activity, allowing the mind to run after the objects of the senses. By this I do not mean to say that in the *Gitâ* Jnâna and Bhakti have not been dealt with as elaborately as Karma, on the contrary, if the *Upanishads*—*Svetâswatara*, for instance, is one of them—had not taught Upâsanâ (meditation and worship) before the *Gitâ*, I would have ventured to say, that it was the *Gitâ* that for the first time taught us not

only Karma but also Bhakti as well. To an impartial reader of the *Gītā*, it will appear clearly, however, that though its treatment of Jñāna and Bhakti is as elaborate as that of Karma, yet Karma is its most prominent and special feature. The reader will now understand why the discourse has been introduced in a field of battle where Karma of a most terrible nature has of necessity to be performed, and why Arjuna has so often been told: "And, therefore, fight, O Bhārata." By this I do not mean to say that before Sri Krishna's time no one had practised Karma, for, that would be contradicting the *Gītā* itself, which tells us that "Janaka and several others reached their goal by Karma," long before Sri Krishna's time. What I mean to say is that it was Sri Krishna who for the first time defined Karma in clear terms and pointed out the principle underlying it and declared in an unambiguous language that, like Jñāna and Bhakti, it was a third means by which godly nature leading to God-vision could be reached. And moreover, even though some might have followed the path before his time, it was forgotten by the time the *Gītā* was preached. "Vivasvān," says Sri Krishna, "had the secret of Karma Yoga revealed to him first; but in course of time it has been forgotten; and I am now describing it to you." (4.1-3)

It is true that in the two opening Slokas of the *Ishopanishat*, we find some indication of Karma Yoga as laid down in the *Gītā*; but it is doubtful, if without the help of the *Gītā*, the true meaning of the Slokas, written so mystically, could be rightly deciphered.

We have said that, though Karma Yoga might have been known to Janaka and some others long before Sri Krishna's time, its secret was lost to the people who remained ignorant of it till Sri Krishna revived it. But are we sure it has not been forgotten and lost again? Has any one seen a sacred text written after the *Gītā*, in which

Karma as preached therein has been reprehended? Has any one heard any Sanskrit preacher speaking of Karma as a practical spiritual exercise for reaching God? It is true that in some of the commentaries Karma has been referred to; but in such cases, by Karma they mean only such actions as are involved in offering sacrifices as preached in the *Vedas*. But the Karma Yoga of the *Gītā* implies a wider range of actions—all actions how stern so ever they may be—necessary for the due discharge of duty. A true Karmi, according to the *Gītā*, is he who faces his duties manfully and without wavering. Does not the *Gītā* practically begin with Sri Krishna rebuking Arjuna, when he, commander of a great army, facing an aggressive and more powerful enemy ready to attack, showed signs of wavering and hesitation? "Do not get faint-hearted," said Sri Krishna to Arjuna. "This is not a mental attitude befitting a man of your position. Give up weakness and stand ready for action—action that the occasion demands." (2. 3)

This then, is the Karma Yoga of the *Gītā*—a living and driving force for action, a living and driving spiritual exercise for the formation of life with God of action as an ideal. Has not this Yoga been lost to us again? I would ask the reader to pause and answer.

Some people think that old age, when bodily activities begin to ebb, is the best period of our life to keep them under control and to practise spirituality with success. What a delusion! The world has yet to see a man neglecting spirituality during the vigour of life turning spiritual in old age and freeing himself from attachment to non-spiritual things. It is true that for the realisation of the selves—the Universal and the individual—the repose or inactivity of a peaceful mind is a necessary condition. But the inactivity needed is the active inactivity of energy and health, and not the inactivity of paralysis and numbness; the

peace needed is the peace of life and vigour and not the peace of death and insensibility. And this is exactly what those who would console themselves by relegating the practice of spirituality to old age, seem to forget.

There are many people in this country—and some of them are amongst the best educated and otherwise best informed too—who think that the old Rishis of the *Vedas* were all Sannyâsis living on roots and fruits in forests away from society, in severe bodily austerity, reduced to mere skin and bone. I would they knew that there were many amongst these Rishis—such as Atri and others like him—who had to spend the greater part of their life in bodily activities of the severest kind—in hard warfares requiring action of the most terrible nature. And yet, they were amongst the best of the Rishis who ever lived. They regulated their life by promptings from within—the promptings that came directly from the Upadrashtâ and Anumantâ residing in their heart. What can be a better fulfilment of spiritual life than to live, move, and regulate life under inspiration from God and discharge duties accordingly,—honestly, fearlessly and without wavering? This is certainly one of the best ways of living in Yoga—in union with God—and it is only in the life of such persons that the true meaning of the oft-quoted 66th Sloka of the 18th Chapter—which requires the aspirant to leave all the injunctions of Shâstras, both positive and negative, aside and seek refuge in God—is revealed. The Karma Yoga of the *Gîtâ* may be practised by all, the wise and

the unwise, the rich and the poor, the old and the young, at all times and in all places. “In this,” says the *Gîtâ*, “there is no useless loss of energy, no fear of transgression; even a little knowledge of it protects from great fear.” (2. 40)

The secret of Karma Yoga, it has already been said, was known to the old Rishis of India. In course of time, however, it was forgotten and lost. Sri Krishna revived it and preached it to Arjuna in the field of Kurukshetra. It is now a long time since then, and it has again been lost and forgotten; and yet the necessity of its revival is not less urgent now than it was in Sri Krishna’s time. May God hasten the day when the people of India—of the land where the *Gîtâ* was conceived and taught—nay, when humanity at large, will understand, appreciate and follow it honestly and manfully, even in the face of difficulties with courage, or to express it in the words of a saintly poet, “with heart within and God o’er head.” Verily to “Act, act in the living present, Heart within and God o’er head” and without being affected by the fruit of such acts, is indeed the essence of Karma Yoga, as it is advocated in the *Gîtâ*. May God hasten the day when all and every one of us may, like Arjuna at the end of the discourse, say honestly to the Soul of our souls within :

“My delusion is destroyed, O Immut-able Lord, my doubts are removed. I have gained true knowledge by Thy grace. I shall obey Thee and do Thy bidding.” (18. 73)

## HINTS ON PRACTICAL EDUCATION

BY SISTER NIVEDITA

### OBJECT-LESSONS

The object-lesson is the very heart of the New Education School. And by perversity of fate, it is the feature which

of all others is most easily parodied and reduced to an absurdity.

In the object-lesson the child is to be brought into living communion with Nature as a whole, that Nature which

is the mother of life, the life of the plant and the life of the animal alike, and also of the stone and metal. In the object-lesson, also, the child is to learn the scientific habit of bringing his thoughts back to their source, to be tested and corrected by the fact. Thus sympathy, truthfulness, accuracy, are amongst the qualities which are built up in this lesson. But through all these and behind them is the creative imagination, continually going out and explaining through the form that which is behind the form and finding the unity of phenomena in the course of phenomena. Reverence, even more than sympathy, should be the fruit of the object-lesson.

At the beginning of the week a chosen object must be taken and set before the class. For an hour, it must be observed, examined, handled and played with, and talked about. The children must feel themselves one with it, whatever it is. If it is a living thing, its movements will be mentioned and described, perhaps imitated. If it is not living and moving, its characteristics will be discovered and enumerated. Thought and play will centre for the week around this object as far as possible.

The first hour was the hour of *impression*. All the impressions that fall upon the senses are like seeds falling upon the soil of the mind, ready to germinate there and strike root. As long as they have not germinated our lesson is fruitless. But in order to germinate, their first need is time. That is why all our lessons last only for a limited interval, not more than an hour, sometimes, with very little children, only for ten minutes at a time. Many seeds, however, after beginning to germinate, are checked in their growth and wither away. Those thoughts that we wish to make fruitful have to find expression. For this we must give much encouragement and scope. This is why we continually return to the object, day after day, and bring it into games, drawings, model-

ling, sewing, composition, and all the forms of activity that occur to us.

By this time we can see that the week is to be dominated by the object. It is a sort of keynote which is to sound again and again through the music of school. A great deal, therefore, depends on the selection of the object. It has to be simple and representative, leading to a wide-spread idea of animals and plants as a whole, giving the child power and impulse to go far in the knowledge and study of Nature and learn for himself.

For the first object, the form that radiates in all directions, can we do better than take an egg? The life of the plant starts from the seed which is an egg, embedded in the fruit, often only a larger and more modified form of egg. We may look, then, at the egg as radiating into life-forms in two different directions, that of the animal, and that of the plant. Thus—

Fish.	Brinjal.
Frog or Tortoise.	Guava.
Bird.	Bulb or Onion.
Mouse or Squirrel.	Lotus.
Cat, Dog, or Cow.	Flower.
Monkey.	Cocoanut or Palm-fruit.

The difficulty in dealing with Indian Nature is its profusion. It is hard to select. One has no idea how much easier this is in a cold country, where winter is strongly marked and all the roots and flowers begin to wake up gently and slowly with the first touch of warmth.

We cannot exhaust Nature in a year's Kindergarten lessons. We can only allow ourselves to feel that we have led the child to run its fingers over the keys. Nor must we give it these elements in their ultimate order, but we must lead and stimulate the child by comparing and tracing out resemblances to form an order of itself. When the child is young, in the first stage of observation, it must be led to interest itself in form and life. Here there must be no destruction, no cut-



ting up. Afterwards, in the late stage, we come to structure, and for this we must examine. The animal that is alive should be the teacher of the child, as it ought to be the teacher of the artist. Even when, later, we cut up a fish to learn how it is made, it should be a fish already dead—not killed before our eyes for the purpose of our knowledge. Even fruits and seeds, in this early stage, must be kept whole and not cut up.

But there are other animals also that might be studied. There is a whole class of animals that it would be good for us to know. Amongst these are spider, mosquito, dragon-fly, butter-fly, snail, prawn, worm, centipede. There ought to be no such thing as disgust or horror in our minds of any living things, and to overcome this we ought to create in the very young a warm love and feeling of being a playmate.

In a somewhat later stage, say, the second term of the school year, we may take details or parts of the organisms which we first approached as a whole. Thus we may take a feather (hair, scale, bony case), a shell, a pot with seed in it, a wing, a flower, a leaf, a shell of nut or seed. Or we may decide to avoid even as much anticipation of order as this implies, and may decide to mix our course of objects from the beginning, taking in one week an animal object, and the next something belonging to the plant. The interest and the curiosity of the child is to lead us. Our only part is to select elements of expression in order to make sure that he has the chance of including them.

As the week begins with the *impression* of the object, so it should end with *expression*. This is why the ideal time-table ends with clay-modelling models of the week's object. Again we might take purely physical objects, with a later stage of learning, such as a burning lamp, flowing water, a moving ball, a pair of scales.

All that the child learns by the object ought to form part of a larger knowledge of Nature. The teacher ought to

be the greatest student of all, teaching herself about botany, zoology and physics. She will be reading and watching to satisfy fifty questions where the child asks only one. Until you have begun, you have no idea of the infinite joy and thirst that these object-lessons can waken in teacher and taught alike.

## THE TEACHING OF GEOGRAPHY

In all teaching we must be guided, not so much by that we have to teach, as by the thought of what the child's mind needs. Everything depends upon the child. The true teacher follows: she does not lead. The child will be happy and interested if the lesson is right, just as we are hungry when we are properly fed.

The best class is one in which the children are much heard. We have to make them long for knowledge before the knowledge reaches them. We have to bring work to them little by little, seeking to offer them that difficulty which they are fitted to surmount. We teach in order to create *intellectual muscle* in the taught, far more than to give them information. If we succeed in developing their faculty, they might be left to acquire knowledge for themselves. This would be the ideal.

It is a law which cannot be too deeply understood and believed by the teacher, that thought proceeds from *concrete* to *abstract*, that knowledge grows by experience, and that experience begins with senses, that two senses are more than twice as good a foundation as one. Therefore where we want the young mind to acquire a new kind of knowledge, we have always first to sit down and consider: How can we make this subject concrete? How can we bring it home to sensation?

Watch the play of children. It is always with *things*. That play is really self-education. Their activity is spontaneous. It obeys some impulse within themselves. But it is the means by which they lay hold of the world out-

side. That teacher is most successful, whose lessons are most full of the spirit of play. The one study that never fails is the early play of mother and grandmother.

How can we bring geographical ideas to a level where they come within the range of the play of a child? How can we set the child to play amidst them? When we know this we shall have solved the problem of geographical education. What is usually wrong with our knowledge is that *we are not properly prepared for it*. Every act of the mind would be rich and joyous and full of ease to an extent we cannot now dream, if only the mind itself had been developed up to it by the right stages of growth,—growth of the idea, growth of the mind itself.

When we ask how we can concretise geographical ideas, so as to make them accessible to the mind of a child, there is one field of observation to which we may turn for our answer. The education of a child is designed to teach him in a short period what he could otherwise only hope to learn in the course of life. It quickens the process that it may add to it. Geographical ideas are ideas of *place*. Even an uneducated man learns to find his way, learns the relation of one place to another. What is the process by which he does so? Can we possibly learn the process, and reapply it to the education of the child?

Again, a child learns by his own *act*. What action can we give him that may enable him to lay hold of ideas of place, and bring them as it were within his command?

I. The place that even the uneducated man comes to know, in his own neighbourhood, is his own home. Let the child, similarly, study the place he knows—his school and the vicinity of his school. And can we turn this study into play? Every good teacher will answer differently. She is no teacher who does not *invent* ways of playing out knowledge. But the *act* by which, in the spirit of play, the geographical faculty can be made to grow, is map-

making. In a true education, the use of the map will never need to be explained to the student, for the simple reason that the truly-educated began himself to make maps before he was six.

This is the first stage of geographical education—the making of maps of the schoolroom, the school garden, the rooms in the school-house, the streets and lanes and houses and gardens in the neighbourhood. Incidentally, one may seek to train the public spirit of the child by teaching him to talk of what he saw on the road to school, of whether the streets were clean or dirty, of what was beautiful, of how noble it is to create beautiful things for the public good. Maps need not always be made, with paper and pencil. Any of the material abundant in the country can be used, beads and sticks, clay, sand, wet thread, or any thing else that pleases the child. But the power to make and use a map is assuredly growing nevertheless. This is the first stage of geographical teaching.

II. In the second stage we go a little further afield, and observe such of the geographical features of the neighbourhood—the river and its flow, a lake or tank, an island, peninsula, isthmus, as may enable the children to form strong and fresh associations with all these words. Instead of the old learning by heart of more or less meaningless terms, we have thus established a personal experience as the basis of future thought. And whole lessons may be given, in which the children are encouraged to find out such things as, Where is the river going to? Where did it come from? How did it grow? The ideal river, with source, mouth, tributaries, *prayāgas*, and enclosing watershed, may be made in clay, as a relief map. Such a map might well take a whole term to make.

III. In the third stage of geographical ideas we have to take note of the fact that the human mind proceeds from the *whole* to the *detail*. If we notice the picture made by a young child, we shall find that he always begins by

making a whole man. It is the maturer mind that seeks to render a face, or a hand, or what not.

In the same way, there comes a time when the child has to be led to consider the world as a whole, the world we live in. Here we enter on such conceptions as those of mountains and plains, land and ocean, climate, north and south, and so on. By this time, the notion of the map—the markings that mean mountains or rivers, and so on,—is well understood, and the child, with maps or a globe before him, can read off a description of any given country. It is always best to lead him to do this for himself. Remember that he learns by his own effort. He proceeds from known to unknown. He reads what maps express, in consequence of his own effort to express the same thing. Gradually, reasoning from what he has to what he has not experienced, he builds up the great idea of the world as a globe, with snow-caps, north and south, and a hot belt midway.

If possible even this idea of the world as a globe should be puzzled out by himself. If we could only carry each individual mind in its education along the path the race has travelled in getting knowledge, the whole of our lives would be changed, for the whole world would be a world of genius, so rich and strong and many-coloured would our thought become. So we must reach the child's deepest faculties by a problem or a picture. We must start him thinking and guessing for himself. He knows what east and west mean. He knows where Calcutta stands, and where is Bombay. Picture a sailor setting forth from Calcutta, in a boat and sailing on and on for months and years. At last after infinite struggle, but always going east, he arrives at Bombay. How is this explained? Even in the end it cannot be guessed if he has to give it up. The roundness of the world, after this work of the child's own mind upon the problem, will be realised and remembered. Until this has been gone through, he ought never

to see a globe. The symbol, the picture, or the story ought always to come *as the reward* of effort made.

What will be the climate of this particular country, hot or cold? Why? The effects of seas, mountains, plain, desert, latitude can be worked out, in case after case, from a few simple principles, easily deduced from experience. There ought to be very little learning or memorising, and a vast amount of reasoning and impression-building throughout this education.

The most fruitful of all considerations in connection with this question of general distribution of areas, is that of the nature of the work imposed by place and the character of the community and civilisations that grow in them. To work out the fact that coast-lines produce fishers, and fishers become sailors, that fertile valleys make peasants, that mountain-sides or deserts make shepherds, and to receive as reward for this some little knowledge of strange races or old civilisations and their history—this is to give a breadth to geographical ideas, that can never be forgotten.

IV. On coming to the fourth stage, that of a definite knowledge of given countries, beginning with his own, we shall find that the child's mind is not wholly a blank. The process that was begun with map of school-house and garden, has been going on silently, and ideas have been accumulating as to the relation of the places about him.

Here again, it must be the whole before the particular—India before Bengal, and yet the homeland first amongst the countries of the world. And the book must only come *at the end* of learning, in order to fix the impressions given. We must return upon sensation, and try to picture the whole country in a series of journeys. In the old days these journeys would have been made by river, to-day they are made by railway. But in any case the journey ought to be imagined, the cities passed, the mountains and lakes seen, the forests, flowers and climate

thought out, with the map before him. After the journey, after many journeys, the province may be described and pictured. Finally, the learning of the lists that books contain may be demanded. Geography ought now to be a passion. Instead of learning the facts being a difficulty, it will be a delight. The mind of the taught has made a beginning. It can be left to teach itself the rest.

### THE TEACHING OF HISTORY

History is very much more difficult to reduce to concreteness than is geography. But on the other hand, it has the advantage of the child's natural passion for a story. We may be able to *play* tales of wars and migrations with bricks or with sticks, or what not; but on the whole we shall have to go to story-telling, and study the child's own methods there in order to deal with history.

We all know the earliest stories that please the child. The very first consists of such statements as that the cat mews, the dog barks, and these over and over again. This is far below the stage of history. Gradually the child comes to the period of grown-ups, and calls for story-telling proper. He listens for hours to tales of Krishna slaying demons, or Sita and Rama wandering in the forest, those wonderful fairy-stories that only the Indian child possesses.

This is the time when a few historical ideas begin to make their appearance. Amongst all the stories will be one or two names and tales taken from the country's narrative. The child begins to have friends and favourites amongst the great men and women of the past. This is the point at which history proper begins, and the teaching of it in the school.

I. The first point that we have to realise is that a very young mind cannot sustain a complicated story. The stories by which we at first build up the idea of history are such in name only, they are in fact word-pictures. We have

always to go back to sensation, always to strike again the note of colour, form, movement, costume, act, word. The things seen must be brief, striking, clearly-defined, strongly-grouped. And there must at this stage be no subtle idea to bind the parts together. All must be simple, forceful, primitive and clear in motive as well as outline.

It is true, in many senses, that the history of India has never yet been written. And here is one of them, that it has never yet been reduced to a series of concrete moments. This needs doing. It can only be done by one who studies Indian history with the *heart*. Mere head-knowledge will not do. All history centres in a succession of vivid moments. We must be made to witness those moments. Having done so, the root of the matter is in us. Indian history is as capable as any other of such treatment. We know that Asoka sent out decrees to be carved on rocks and pillars, for these exist to the present day. Would it be difficult to think out the scene itself, the despatching of the orders, the carving of the message?

A second point about these word-pictures is that they need not be told in their historic order. The child will create order, later, amongst his own impressions. In the young mind there is no order, no correlation. One of the greatest of mental delights is to feel the growth of this. A child I know was given a flower to model. It carefully pulled the flower to pieces, and modelled each separate part separately, enclosed the whole in a match-box and handed it in, with perfect self-satisfaction as a model of the flower. There was here no perception of connection or co-ordination. The same applies to our ideas of history. We must first acquire a quantity of impressions, and then afterwards see the sequences spring up amongst them. This perception of sequence and succession is the true development of the historical sense. Our notion of time is derived from our idea of things that have happened in the course of time.

So we must make word-pictures, and we must give them in anything but their true order, only taking care to make them vivid and distinct. Buddha leading the goats up to Rajgir and pleading for their lives may be the history-lesson one day, and the very next may be Humayun breaking the musk-bag at the news of the birth of Akbar. Or we may picture the arrival of the Chinese pilgrim, Hiouen-Tsang, at a Buddhist monastery, say Nalanda or Ajanta, one day, and the next day we may go back to Skanda Gupta and his victory of the Huns. History that is not seen as pictures is not history at all to the childish mind, and is better not attempted.

II. The next stage of history groups itself, not round vivid movements but round favourite characters. This is *social history*. Word-pictures of all old cities and the life lived in them, of old *āshramas* or universities, of pilgrimages, of wars, all these have to be attached to personalities, to great men and women, and the idea, not of their lives at first, but of their personalities. We like them. We like to be with them. Beautiful things happen round them. This should be the feeling of the child. Here the teacher has most to discover what new meaning we begin to find out in old books when we search them for this kind of knowledge. In these early stages of history, the teacher should remember that the bent she gives the children's sympathies will stay with them probably for life. Therefore one should be careful to base one's feeling, and one's praise and blame, on the strong and simple outlines of right and wrong, leaving the

judgment free as far as possible for later formation of personal opinion.

III. Again, there is the question of the *expression* of its knowledge by the child. When these two stages are past, we shall find that we have built up two kinds of elements in the mind of the taught, which together make the historical imagination. We have built up the idea of events, and the idea of persons.

We are now ready for the swing and drift of history. Behind them we shall be ready to see the significance of persons and moments. We can watch the Rajput giving place to the Musalman; or the Buddhist monasteries emptying in Gandhara; or the life and labours of Asoka or of Sankaracharya or of Aurangzebe; or the Mahratta overturning the Mogul; or the French struggling with the English in the South. And here the well-taught student will show his quality by startling us with wonderful questions. Encourage him to find out his own answers,—for original questions and original answers make works of genius.

Not until we are thus prepared, ought we to be asked to face the learning of dreary facts and talk about facts that are now so apt to be called history. Only the lover of India can write the history of India. Only the lover of India can teach the history of India.

India is the music of the song, the theme of her own drama. Throughout our teaching we have it in our own hands to determine the thirst that shall reverberate with their country's name through our children's lives. We have it in our power to create those elementary associations that shall forbid them to think other than that.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

This last issue of the year begins with *Christianity in India* by SWAMI VIVEKANANDA. It is a rather imperfect report of a lecture delivered by the Swami at

Detroit (U.S.A.) in March, 1894. This is published in *Prabuddha Bharata* for the first time and is not included in *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*. . . . Next follow two *Unpublished Letters of Swami Vivekananda*

which are extremely interesting. The second letter has reference to certain remarks in his famous speech in Madras, *My Plan of Campaign*. . . . *Discourses by Swami Premananda* is taken from the diary of a disciple. . . . S. RADHAKRISHNAN who contributes *Philosophy and the Life-values* to this issue, needs little introduction to our readers. He occupies the King George V Chair of Philosophy in the Calcutta University and is the author of several well-known works, such as *The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy*, *The Hindu View of Life*, *Indian Philosophy*, 2 volumes, *Kalki*, etc. He enjoys international reputation as a thinker, writer and speaker. He delivered the Upton Lectures at Oxford in 1927 and the Hibbert Lectures (for 1929) at Manchester and London in the beginning of this year, and has shortly returned from England after having occupied the chair of Comparative Religion in the Manchester College, Oxford, for some time. The professor, who is well-versed in the Eastern and Western lore, can certainly speak with authority on the comparative values of the two civilisations. . . . We are glad to be able to publish *The Mexican Analogy* by K. B. MADHAVA, M.A., A.I.A. (LONDON), and hope it will prove interesting and instructive to Indian readers. Mr. Madhava is a brilliant professor of the Mysore University in which he occupies the chair of Statistical Economics. He is an Associate of the Institute of Actuaries, London, and has many thoughtful works to his credit. . . . *Karma Yoga of the Gita* is a thoughtful study by PRAKASH CHANDRA SINHA ROY, B.A., NYAYAVAGISHA who is a retired Government official and the author of, among other works, a treatise on logic and an essay on the *Gita*. . . . We have no doubt our readers will appreciate the *Hints on Practical Education* by SISTER NIVEDITA, which we include in this number. The Sister was an expert in the theory and practice of education, as our readers may know. The present article forms part of a work on education

by the Sister, which is still unpublished. . . . We regret we have to omit *Ashtavakra Samhita* by SWAMI NITYASWARUPANANDA from the present issue. The chapter to be next published is a very long one and we want it to be begun in the first number of the next year for the convenience of new subscribers.

### ANECDOTES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

We present our readers with a few anecdotes of Swami Vivekananda, which we think are hitherto unknown.

Here is an incident which tells of the large heart of Swami Vivekananda. When Swamiji was about to return from England for the first time, his friends in London were raising by subscription some money to present him as a purse. When the collection was going on, some one handed over a petition to him for helping a batch of poor and homeless persons. As soon as he got the petition in his hand, Swamiji gave away the whole amount of the collection to the man. When he was asked by one of his friends why he did so, Swamiji replied : "These men are suffering for want of shelter. What is my money good for, if not for helping these people?"

\*

Mr. Alan Leo wrote :

"I met Swami Vivekananda many times in London in 1895, also at the house of Mr. E. T. Sturdy with whom he was staying in Berkshire, and whenever I asked him for his birth-hour, he invariably said he had forgotten when he was born, and on one occasion when pressed, he smilingly replied : 'My dear Mr. Leo, I have taken a through ticket, and have forgotten I was ever born.'"

\*

One Mr. Athwale happened to go to America just about the time the Swami Vivekananda had got a firm footing in New York. As he had gone there without any introduction, learning that the Swami had made a name for himself

and had secured a circle of influential followers and friends, he naturally went to seek his assistance. Athwale met him in the afternoon when he was sitting in the midst of a large number of ladies and gentlemen. As soon as the Swami saw his friendless countryman before him, he treated the latter as an old friend. He asked the visitor if he knew Hindustani. On receiving an affirmative answer, a cordial talk ensued, in course of which sound advice was given. At the end of the conversation, the Swami asked Athwale to remember two things which would ensure him success. "Avoid," said he, "the temptation of woman. And whether you are able or not, show that you can spend money freely and you will succeed." With this advice, he introduced the enterprising Indian to an influential lady friend of him, who at last managed to get him an entrance into one of the greatest factories in America.

The Reporter to *The Rutherford American* wrote in conclusion, after hearing Swamiji's lecture on "Indian Religious Thought," as follows :

"As my companion and I wended our way homeward, the vast vault of the blue sky was studded with stars, and the blessed fragrance of Christmas still lingered in the streets of the great city. We thought of the old and beautiful legend of the Eastern Magi who followed the star which led them, with their homage of Frankincense and Myrrh, to the Babe lying in the manger of Bethlehem. And we wondered if this Oriental wanderer was not one of the same high caste, who nineteen hundred years later had come to our Western Continent to throw light upon the inner meaning of that pure gospel, which that noble soul had preached and illustrated."

Thus said Swami Turiyananda about Swamiji :

"Sri Ramakrishna used to say of him that he was truthful,—a naked, unsheathed sword. As regards his food he

said : 'He is like a blazing fire ; whatever is thrown in, would be consumed.' On our first meeting, Sri Ramakrishna introduced us to each other. At the very first sight I felt that he was a great hero, but also somewhat proud. He had a strong tendency to argue. He did not easily accept what Sri Ramakrishna said. On our way home we had a talk. Swamiji said : 'The more far-sighted a man, the more intelligent we consider him. . . . Because we are not having nectar, why should we eat dirt ? Why should we live in the world because we are not having God ?' When I asked him about Sri Ramakrishna, he said : 'If you ask me, I say he is L—O—V—E personified.' . . . Evidently he was conscious of his powers. At the Baranagore Math, there would often be talks about preaching. He said : 'Every one preaches. What others do unconsciously, I shall do consciously. If you obstruct me, I shall go to the pariah villages and there preach. Preaching means expression. You think that Trilinga Swami is silent. No, his silence itself is preaching. Plants and trees also preach.' "

### VICARIOUS ATONEMENT

It may legitimately be said that we know little of the details of the lives of great sages and prophets. The accounts that are available are more or less mere outlines. The Hindu saints and prophets are no exception. Yet these details are often specially helpful. The life of Sri Ramakrishna, lived so near to us, reveals thus great many truths which otherwise would have been hidden. This is no place to estimate the help that we have received from him in this respect. We shall mention here only one point. We have been always familiar with the idea that spiritual men, if they like, can take away our *Karmas* and free us from their bondage. But where was the proof ? Could this actually take place ? Common sense would tell us that it was impossible. The life of Sri Rama-

krishna, however, gives us\* clear evidence of its possibility. There were cases in his life, in which he suffered for others and made them free. He himself repeatedly declared that his last illness was due to taking the sins of others on himself. Now we can believe in its possibility, though we may not explain how it is done.

An American gentleman once wrote us that though Christ also cured diseases, raised the dead and did other such miracles, he is never said to have suffered in consequence,—how do we explain the difference?—Sri Ramakrishna suffered, but Christ did not. Our reply to this is that we know very little of the actual details of Christ's life. How do we know that he did not suffer? One point we have to remember in this connection. The word "suffering" as applied to persons like Sri Ramakrishna, bears a different connotation. When *we* suffer, our self-consciousness is overwhelmed by the pangs of suffering. But when *they* suffer, it

only the body and the surface mind that are affected; their self-consciousness remains unaffected. When a Sri Ramakrishna's body becomes diseased, it does not indicate that the *Karmas* of others have overwhelmed him. The corresponding referred to above says that Christ possessed the full mastery over Nature and was, therefore, not liable to suffering even when he cured disease or raised the dead. The point is not whether one has mastery over Nature or not. The point is, whether the laws of *Karma* should have sway or not. Even in Christ's life we find the recognition of the law of *Karma*. It is this which explains the need of Christ's vicarious atonement. God wanted that some one must suffer for man's sin. Sin must pay its penalty. There was no escape from this. Therefore Christ came forward and atoned on behalf of mankind. The law of *Karma* is completely justified in vicarious atonement. We do not call Sri Ramakrishna's suffering for others' *Karma* as vicarious atonement, for the phrase has a special

theological significance. We would only point out that Sri Ramakrishna recognised that if there were *Karmas*, these must have their way.

Now this is that another may suffer for one's *Karma*, is a very deep-seated idea among the Hindus. Even ordinary village people believe that highly spiritual persons can relieve people of their evil *Karmas* and take them upon themselves. They often approach *Sādhus* and *Santas* for such relief. They also believe that spiritual persons can change the course of man's *Karmas*. As a result we have the *Guru-vāṭa*,—the idea that if a spiritual person accepts one as a disciple, he not only gives him spiritual instruction, but takes away all obstructing *Karmas* from the disciple's mind, so that the disciple has not to suffer for his sins and has an unimpeded spiritual progress. It is believed that the *Karmas* will be suffered by the *Guru* himself,—for no *Karma* can go without having an effect. The belief that by touching a holy person one can get rid of one's sins, is also very common. Not that such beliefs are always justified. Not all spiritual persons have such redeeming power. But some surely have, and hence the inevalent relief.

Nor is this a mere popular belief. There are references in Hindu books, testifying to the truth of this belief. We shall here mention some of them.

(1) The *Kaustubha Upanishad*: "He gives up both good and evil *Karmas*. His dear relatives get the good and the overcome the evil *Karma*." (14)

[The theory is that every man of God-realisation has his good and evil *Karmas*. These are called *prārabdha karmas*, which were acquired in previous lives, and as a result of which he had to be born on earth. When a man realises the highest Truth, all his other *Karmas* are destroyed, but these *prārabdha karmas* remain with him, though they cannot bind him anyway. This reference shows that one's *Karma* can be inherited by another.]



(2) We have in the *Mahābhārata*, *Adi Parva*, Chapter 84, the story of a king named Yayāti who became old and yet wanted to have more sense-enjoyment. Puru, his son, took his old age on himself and gave him back his youth.

[Here also the possibility of taking another's conditions on oneself is recognised.]

(8) In the *Mahābhārata*, *Shānti Parva*, Chapter 281, the following story occurs: By killing a demon called Vritra, Indra incurred sin. To get rid of this sin, he went to Brahmā. Brahmā sent for several other gods, and having divided Indra's sin into several portions, asked them to take a portion each. They accepted them and thus Indra was set free.

(4) The *Manu-Samhitā*: "The man of realisation, having given his good *Karmas* to his dear ones and his evil *Karmas* to his enemies, attains the eternal *Brahman* through meditation."  
(6. 79)

[See reference No. 1.]

(5) Buddha said: "May all sins and sufferings of the world come to me, and may all the world be happy!"

[Here also the possibility of taking others' *Karmas* is recognised.]

(6) The *Kulārṇava Tantra*: "Often the sin committed by the disciple, entails on the *Guru*."

(7) An incident in the life of Sri Chaitanya: It was in the fifteenth century A.D. It is mentioned in *Sri Chaitanya Bhāgavata*, *Madhya Khanda*, Chapter 18, that Sri Chaitanya said to two arch sinners, Jagāi and Mādhāi: "I am responsible for all the sins that you have committed in your past millions of lives, if you do not commit any more sin. . . . I have taken all your sins. Just see with your own eyes." In order to prove to them that they had indeed been freed from their sins, he became dark-coloured. And he said to others: "Do you no longer consider them sinners. I have taken their sins on myself."

## REVIEW

THE MYSTERIES OF THE BIBLE. By Bital Chandra Chakravarty, M.A., Vidyanidhi. 48 pp. Price as. 8.

This booklet is intended to throw light on some principal doctrines of the Bible such as (1) The origin of the serpent-idea, (2) The forbidden tree, (8) The temptation, (4) The fall from heaven,—the original sin, (5) Crucifixion, Resurrection, Holy Ghost. Mr. Chakravarty has brought his studies to bear upon the fact that these Biblical notions have been borrowed from the Hindus.

The serpent-idea: "The Vedic Ahi (Vritra) the veritable prototype of Satan) passed almost unaltered into the Iranian Avesta, where it became known with the descriptive epithet 'dahak' as 'Azidahaka' which is equivalent to Sanskrit 'Ahi dahaka'. Ahi reappears in the Greek Echis, Echidna."

The temptation: Adam and Eve are taken from the passive Purusha and the active Prakriti of the Samkhya Philosophy and the serpent signifies Tamas. The Vedic picture of the serpent is changed into the image of the Purusha and Prakriti.

The fall from heaven—the original sin: "The Samkhya parallelism to the Bible would be more vividly brought out, if we should understand Adam standing for Sattva, Eve for Rajas and the Serpent for Tamas. Then Tamas or Evil with the help of Rajas or motive power would overcome Sattva or goodness and thus the degeneracy of the world would set in. The preponderance of Tamas ingrained in the very constitution of the universe is the original sin."

The crucifixion—Resurrection—Holy Ghost: By crucifixion Christ is said to have purged the earth of the original sin. It is just the idea of Shiva swallowing poison for the good of the world. Shiva conquered death (Mrityunjaya). So Christ too reappeared after his death all triumphant. His spirit was undying and holy.

Creation of Eve: Eve was drawn out of Adam and the same took place in his deep sleep. The deep sleep of Adam finds corroboration in the sleep of Narayana (Purushottama) from which he is roused being actuated by the desire of creation. Prakriti, the counterpart of Eve, stands for

this desire which is inside and not outside Purusha.

We observe certain inconsistencies in these remarks of the author. In the Svetasvatara Upanishad two birds stand for the doer and the spectator, the Jiva and Atman in one and the same being. Jiva is not Prakriti alone, it is rather a mystical mixture of both Purusha and Prakriti. Moreover, Tamas is a part of Prakriti, while Satan is not a part of Eve. Again Adam, Eve and Satan stand for Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. How is it that Adam is Purusha at one place and Sattva, i.e., Prakriti in the other? The fall corresponds more to the Vaishnava conception of Jivatma being subject to the force of Maya (ignorance), a free soul becoming bound. Purusha does not suffer for the cosmic evolution of Prakriti and Prakriti does not constitute the whole of man. Finally Adam is Purushottama and Eve is his desire for creation. Has Purusha according to Samkhya any desire? Has Prakriti the desire of Purusha?

However the author opens a discussion which is original and thought-provoking. His suggestions may help some researches along this line. The Vedas of the Indians, the Avesta of the Persians and the Genesis of the Jews have got many traditions in

common and they bear family likeness, and undoubtedly the Vedas come first in order of time. Yet in the absence of any direct evidence, it is difficult to prove whether one race borrows its ideas from the other. For according to the Psychological theory, as against the Historical one, every race-mind evolves similar ideas at certain stages, a little modified by environments. It cannot be denied that at a ripe stage, when ideas are imported from outside, they receive ready acceptance and find a permanent place in the records of the race.

**INDIAN IDEALS.** By Annie Besant, D. L. Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. 138 pp. Price Re. 1/- (board), Re. 1/8/- (cloth).

The book contains the Kamala Lectures for 1924-25 delivered by the author at the Calcutta University on Indian ideals in (1) Education, (2) Religion and Philosophy and (3) Art. It is an interesting study of Indian life, its glories and debilities in the past and the part it is destined to play in near future. The author's interpretation of Indian thought and life is considerably coloured by her Theosophical views. The book is nicely printed. The get-up is also good.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### R. K. MISSION, BARISAL

The report for the years 1928 and 1929 is to hand, giving a nice record of work done.

There were weekly classes on the Gita; 140 sittings in all were held to expound the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda and other great teachers; there were birthday celebrations of these two great teachers with lectures and feeding of the poor. The Mission has a library and it helps other educational institutions by monthly grants. It maintains a students' home where 16 students lived in 1929. The home is making fine progress.

199 persons were given temporary help; 36 patients were picked up and carried to local hospitals, 20 patients were treated with medicine and diet, and 76 patients were nursed in their own homes. The Mission also did valuable service during small-pox and cholera epidemics in several parts of the district.

The work of the centre is growing apace.

It wants at least Rs. 25,000 for the construction of a house for the accommodation of the students' home, Mission office, library, and outdoor dispensary, and a technical department.

All contributions may be sent to the President, R. K. Mission, Barisal, Bengal.

### R. K. ASHRAMA, KATHIAWAR

The report of the above institution from March, 1928, to February, 1930, giving a fine record of work, is to hand. The Ashrama which is the only one of the R. K. Order in Kathiawar, completed its third year of existence in 1930.

Regular discourses on the Upanishads and the works of Swami Vivekananda were held several times a week in the Ashrama; a series of class talks were given to High School students; there were 21 public lectures; celebrations of birthdays of Prophets; a library and reading room

were maintained in the Ashrama ; several publications were brought to disseminate religious teaching ; and *Bhajan*s were held twice a fortnight, which were highly appreciated by people. The Ashrama also helped poor students and others.

The needs of the Ashrama are: (1) a building for its accommodation, estimated at Rs. 30,000 ; (2) help for the maintenance of *Sādhu*s and workers ; (3) books for the library ; and (4) help for a students' home.

#### PREMANANDA LANTERN LECTURES

The Ramakrishna Seva-Samiti Sangha which has been carrying on an educational propaganda in the villages of Vikrampur,—a well-known section of the Dacca district—has associated its lantern lectures with the hallowed name of Swami Premananda, a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, who had visited Vikrampur three times. In course of five months 20 lectures were delivered in 11 villages. An appeal has now been sent out by the headmasters of several high schools for funds for the help of the Sangha. We also join with them in their appeal and hope the public will do generous help to the Sangha in its noble work of welfare.

All contributions may be sent to *Secretary, R. K. Seva-Samiti Sangha, P.O., Kalma, Dacca, Bengal.*

#### R. K. ASHRAMA, ASANSOL

It is with great pleasure that we went through the report of the above institution for the years 1927 to 1929. The Ashrama maintained an Orphanage with 4 orphans, an L. P. School with 50 pupils against 15 in the beginning, a Night School with 40 students from the depressed classes, a Library and a Charitable Dispensary ; carried on Social and Philanthropic works, such as, cremating the dead, giving occasional pecuniary help to needy persons, coming to the rescue of stranded or destitute boys or girls, and doing relief in times of fire and flood. It also arranged to bring some Sannyāsins of the Belur Math who delivered lectures and held discourses on various occasions. The birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna were duly observed and on each occasion the *Daridra-Nārāyaṇ*s were sumptuously fed.

The Ashrama is badly in need of a Shrine room and a well in its own premises. It is sincerely hoped that these wants will be removed before long by the generous gentlemen of the locality.

It is also proposed to open an artisan school for the labouring class. But the resources at the disposal of the Ashrama are not sufficient to meet the expenses. It, therefore, appeals to the generous public to help the cause. Contributions, however small, will be thankfully accepted and acknowledged by the *President or Secretary, Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Asansol, E. I. Ry.*

#### R. K. SEVASHRAMA, CHITTAGONG

The report of the above institution for the year 1929-30, gives a humble but useful record of work done. The members of the Sevashrama nursed patients in their own houses, attended some small-pox and cholera patients, cremated dead bodies, picked up helpless patients and sent them to the hospital, gave temporary relief in the shape of money and rice to some helpless and invalid persons, collected and distributed some warm clothings to the poor people, picked up an old helpless invalid woman and attended her in the Sevashrama, gave Homœopathic medicines to the outdoor patients, and did relief work on the occasion of the *Siva-Chaturdashī-Melā*. Towards spreading true education the institution conducted a Primary School for girls with facilities for religious and technical training, and also for Sanskrit study for the elderly girls, arranged for imparting religious, technical, and hygienic instructions among the women, conducted a students' home and a library. It also organised several centres in villages for religious and physical culture, celebrated the birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, as well as the *Durgā-pujā* and the *Jagaddhātṛa-pujā*, and held weekly discourses with *Kirtana*.

The Ashrama stands in need of purchasing the land in which it stands and of constructing the necessary houses, which will cost at least Rs. 4,000, and hopes its appeal in the cause of the noble work will be generously responded to.













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